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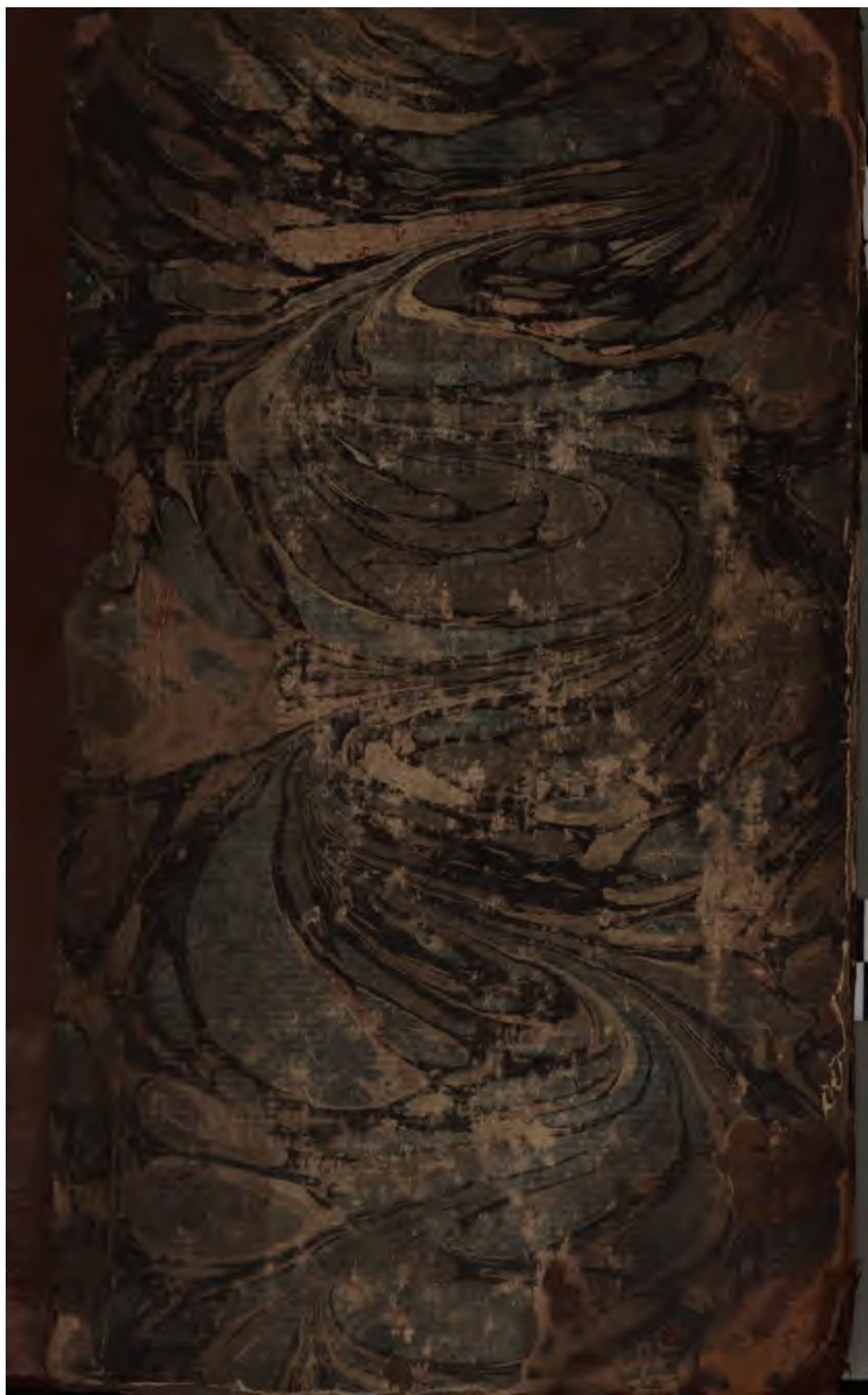
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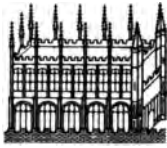
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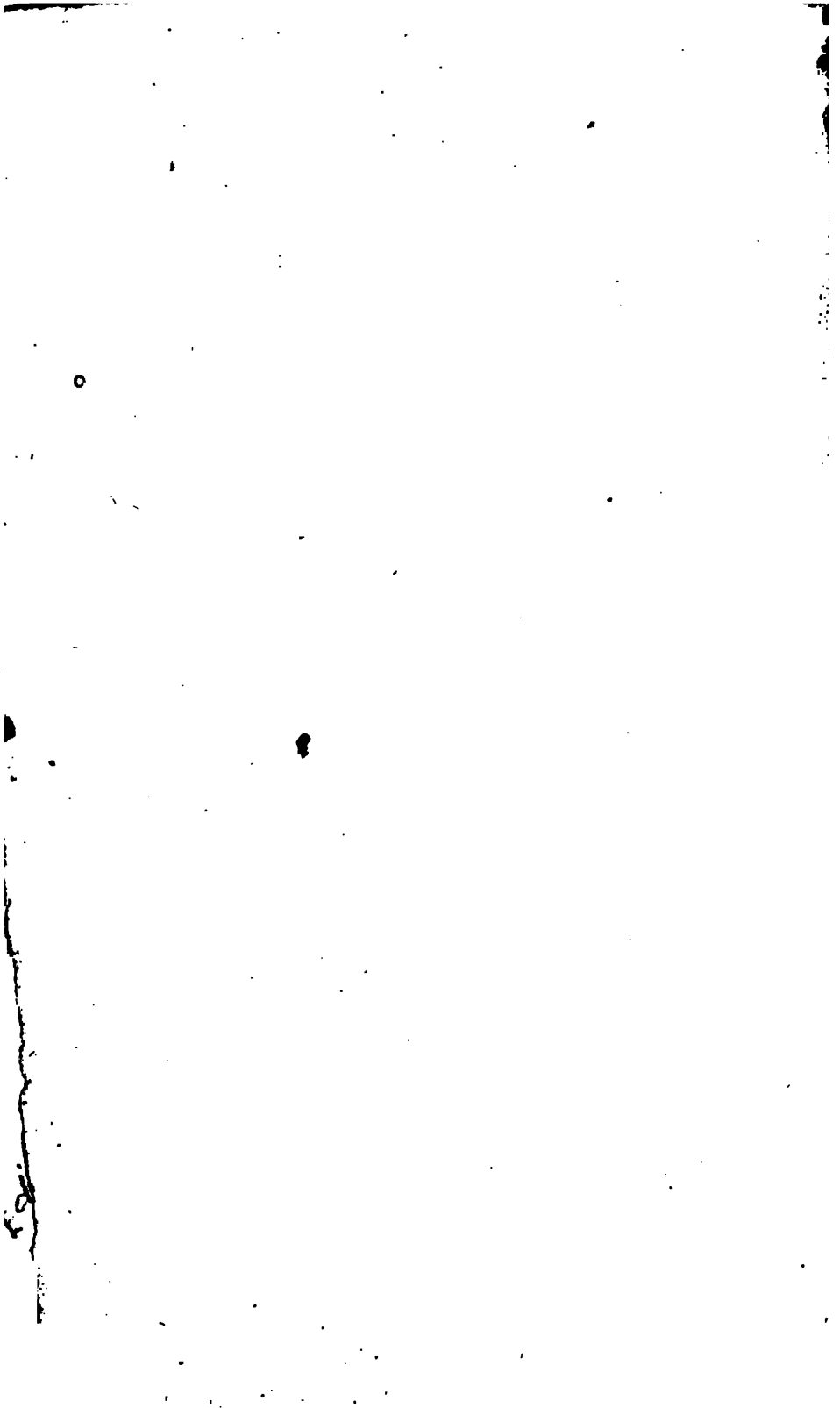


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Engraved by C. Hill

JAMES I.

From the Original Engraving in Pinkerton's Iconographia

POETICAL REMAINS

OF

JAMES THE FIRST,

KING OF SCOTLAND.

I Decus, I nostrum, melioribus utere fatis. VIRGIL.

——— Sine pondere terram,
Spirantesque crocos, et in urna perpetuum ver. JUV.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED FOR J. AND E. BALFOUR.

M,DCC,LXXXIII.

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that proper record-keeping is essential for ensuring transparency and accountability in financial reporting.

2. The second part of the document outlines the various methods and techniques used to collect and analyze data. It highlights the need for a systematic approach to data collection and the importance of using reliable sources of information.

3. The third part of the document focuses on the analysis and interpretation of the collected data. It discusses the various statistical and analytical tools that can be used to identify trends, patterns, and relationships within the data.

4. The fourth part of the document discusses the importance of communicating the results of the analysis to the relevant stakeholders. It emphasizes the need for clear and concise reporting and the use of appropriate visual aids to enhance the understanding of the findings.

5. The fifth part of the document discusses the importance of reviewing and updating the data collection and analysis process regularly. It emphasizes the need for continuous improvement and the use of feedback to refine the process and ensure its effectiveness.

E R R A T A.

In the first Dissertation, page 6. line 16. for *cantare* read *saltare*.

In p. 43. l. 19. read *half a century*.

In p. 17. l. 5. for *fate* read *fall*.

In p. 83. last line in the notes, read *orfevereri*.

In p. 140. in the notes, l. 4. for *poets* read *poet*.

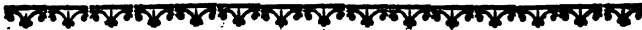
In p. 142. l. 6. *hortis* probably is an error of the transcriber, in place of *sportis*, which is more applicable to the greyhound, for sport.

In p. 143. in the notes, for *lefty* read *leste*, an old French word for *nimble*, or *active*, which is an epithet very suitable to the nature of the beaver.





HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL
D I S S E R T A T I O N
ON THE
L I F E A N D W R I T I N G S
OF
JAMES I. KING OF SCOTLAND.



A

HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL
DISSERTATION, &c.



IN this age of curiosity, when whatever seems to throw light upon the history, literature, or manners of our country in ancient times, is anxiously sought after, the publication of the following Poems, the works of James I. King of Scotland, one of the most illustrious persons of the beginning of the fifteenth century, may be no unacceptable present to the Public.

The poem of *Christ's Kirk of the Green* has been published before this time, commonly as the production of King James V. though falsely, and without foundation, as I shall endeavour to prove.

A

The

The other poem, called *the King's Quair*, was never before published. Of the illustrious author, it may be agreeable to the reader to give a sketch of the life and character, so far as to be explanatory of the two following poems.

Men of active and superior parts have often soared to thrones; but how few of the sceptered rank have distinguished themselves as men of genius! and rarer still, how few to rank and genius have joined the qualities of the heart, virtue and public spirit! So rare a phaenomenon, however, was James I. King of Scotland.

This Prince was the fourth in descent, from the great *Robert Bruce*, the restorer of the Scottish monarchy.

His father, Robert III. of a mild disposition, affected ease and retirement. Near the close of his reign, on the death of his beloved Queen *Anabella*, broken with age and infirmities, he devolved the cares of government upon his brother the Duke of Albany, a man of ability and parts, and of great ambition. James was the younger of King Robert's two sons. The elder, *David Duke of Rothsay*, a high spirited Prince, at an age

age rising to manhood, ungovernable often in his passions and pleasures, had given occasion for many complaints against him, which being no way palliated by his ambitious uncle, procured an order from the weak King for confining the young Prince to the castle of Falkland. There, under the custody of Albany, to whom that castle then belonged, he died within a few months, starved to death, according to all the Scottish historians. The Duke of Albany, accused as the author of the Prince's death, stood a trial, and was acquitted. As he had then the power of administration in his hands, no other issue was to be expected. The old infirm King was sensible too late of the effects of his weakness; and, from the death of the Duke of Rothsay, dreading that of his only remaining son James, the sole bar between his ambitious uncle Albany and the throne, to prevent the like fate, and confiding in the ancient alliance between the Scots and French, which had subsisted from the time of Charlemagne, he determined to send the young Prince, then about twelve years of age, to his ally the King of France.

The King trusted to a treaty which was then in force between him and King Henry IV. of England. Without regard, however, to the law of nations,

4 A DISSERTATION ON

nations, the ship on board of which was Prince James, with the Earl of Orkney and others, his attendants, was taken by an English vessel upon that coast, and carried to London. Considering the suspicious conduct of the Duke of Albany in the imprisonment and death of the Duke of Rothsay, it is no improbable conjecture that the capture of the Prince of Scotland, the only person between Albany and the throne, after the King, might have been owing to intelligence given by Albany to the English Monarch, of the Prince's voyage. In the time of peace between the two nations, it is scarcely to be presumed, that, without positive orders, such a breach of treaty would have been attempted by any private person. Be that, however, as it may, the shock of this new disaster, suddenly brought to his father's ears, so affected him, that he died in a few days (of pure grief) at his castle of Rothsay, in the isle of Bute*.

The young Prince was carried to the Tower of London, where, after two years confinement, he was sent to the castle of Nottingham, and after that to Windsor castle †, which seems, from that

* 1404.

† Windsor castle was built by Edward III. and the place where he and his successors generally kept their court.

that time, to have been the chief place of his residence while he was captive in England. There, under the care of Sir John Pelham, appointed his governour, an accomplished gentleman of worth and literature, to compensate, in some degree, the confinement of his person, his mind was enriched with a most liberal and princely education. James was naturally endowed with great parts, and, under able masters, attained, as is said by the writers of that age, to a great degree of perfection in almost every branch of the learning of those times, and in every accomplishment of a gentleman. In all athletic exercises, particularly in the use of the sword and spear, he was eminently expert*. To his knowledge of the Greek and Roman languages, the last of which he wrote with ease, he joined the philosophy of that age †, poetry, and music. In the scientific, as well as in the practical parts of music, he greatly excelled.

* Ense cum altero dimicare, et hasta ad unguem certare sic callebat, ut si luçantem vidisses, athletam dixisses; *Boetius, hist. lib. 13.*

† Jam vero humaniores artes, grammaticam, oratoriam, poeticamque ut tum temporis eximie noverat.—In lingua vernacula, ornata faciebat carmina. Theologiam, et jus, sic habebat, ut nulli cederet; *Boet.*

6 A DISSERTATION ON

led *. He is justly reckoned the first reformer, if not the inventor of the *Scottish songs*, or vocal music †. There was nothing, says Hauthornden, within the circle of the liberal arts, that he had not applied his mind unto, seeming rather born to letters than instructed.

The remark of Buchanan, upon King James's excellency in music, is unbecoming a son of Apollo, himself one of the train of the muses! ' *In musicis curiosus, quam regem, vel deceat, vel expectat,*' is the illiberal censure of the reformer, the declaimer against monarchy! The observation of Sallust, from whom the phrase is copied, when applied to the vicious Sempronius, ' *Psallere et cantare, elegantius quam necesse est probae,*' is just and proper, but is here misapplied by the Scottish historian.

In the age of James I. and long afterwards, music, not only in the practical, but in the theoretic parts, was esteemed a very important branch of princely education. Henry VIII. was so much
master

* *Musicam exacte tenebat, ac quicquid illi arti affinebatur peritissime; Boet. ibid.*

† See dissertation on Scottish music.

master of the science of music, as to have composed several pieces of church-music, some of which are still remaining *. In King James, his skill in music was no abuse of time. A genius as he was, taught, or rather inspired, by Nature, arrives at perfection without labour. Besides, James had improved his mind with every branch of the learning of the age; and, whoever considers his long captivity of eighteen years, during many of which he was under strict confinement, will not blame him for relaxing from the severer studies of literature and philosophy, and sweetening his hours of solitude and confinement by such refined and rational amusement †.

James

* Erasmus, his contemporary, vouches this fact.—In a late collection of anthems, published by Dr Boyce from the books of the Royal Chapel, there is an anthem for four voices, composed by King Henry, ‘*O Lord, the maker of all things,*’ which is allowed to be good; and Sir John Hawkins, in his history of music, vol. 2d, has published another anthem of King Henry’s, for three voices, superscribed thus, ‘*Henricus Octavus;*’ and at the end of the cantus, or upper part, are these words, ‘*Quod Henricus Octavus.*’

† The King, in the following plaintive verses, tells us how he passed part of his solitary hours in prison.

Whereas

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James did not remain a recluse during all the time of his captivity; that martial Prince Henry V. having revived the claim of Edward III. to the crown of France, invaded that kingdom in August 1405, and gained the famous victory over the French at Azincourt. From the beginning of this war, King Henry saw the importance of having
the

Quhare as in ward, full oft I wold bewaille
My deadly lyfe, full of peyne and penance;
Saing oft thus, quhat have I gilt to faille
My fredome in this warld, and my plesance?

The long dayis and the nightis eke
I wold bewaille my fortune in this wife,
For quhich agains distresse, comfort to feik
My cultum was, on mornis for to ryse,
Airly as day, O happy exercife!

It fell me to mynd, of many diverse thing
Of this and that, can I not say quharefore
Bot slepe, for craft, in erth might I no more
For quhich as tho' coude I no better wyle,
Bot toke a boke, to rede upon a while,

Of quhich the name is clepit properly
Boece——

Happy Prince, who could dispel the gloom of a prison by the manly and elegant exercises of philosophy, poetry, and music!

the Scottish Prince in his hands, as a pledge, for preventing his countrymen either from making incursions on the border, while he was in France, or sending troops to the assistance of their French allies.

As Henry, soon after the battle of Azincourt, was obliged to return to England, the Scots remained quiet. Henry having recruited his forces, landed his army a second time in Normandy *, and being joined by the forces of the weak King Charles VI. and the Duke of Burgundy, carried all before him. The valorous actions of that heroic Prince are well known. The unfortunate Dauphin Charles, by the insanity of his father, the resentment of his vitious mother, and the valour of the English Monarch, must have been driven from the throne of his ancestors, but for the assistance he got at that critical time from his ancient allies the Scots, under the banners of their brave leaders the Scottish nobility. The political system of the Scots in those days was extremely simple. Their first principle was independence; in maintaining of which they ever were lavish of their blood. Jealous of their powerful southern neighbours, who frequently had attempted their conquest, the Scots

B naturally

* 1418.

naturally turned their eyes to France, the rival of England, who, at all times, was ready to assist them, and to cultivate the ancient alliance which had subsisted between the two kingdoms from the time of Charlemagne. During King Henry's first expedition to France, the Scots had remained quiet, and given little or no aid to their allies. The rapid success, however, of the English Monarch in his second expedition, (which at length, by the famous treaty of Troye, settled the crown of France upon King Henry and his issue with Catherine of France), awakened at once the Scots to the impending ruin which threatened the independence of their country, by the weight of such an accession to the King of England. A choice body of 7000 Scots, commanded by John Stuart, Earl of Buchan, son to the Regent of Scotland, landed at Rochelle, to the assistance of the Dauphin, accompanied by many of the Scottish nobility. The French war was now the path to glory and greatness. Never did the Scots make a more conspicuous figure than at that period, nor any set of warriors ever acquire more distinguished honours and fame. The Earl of Buchan, the leader of the Scots, arose, by his valour, to the dignity of *Constable of France*, and led the van of the French army; Douglas, Earl of Wigton, was created Marischal of France;

France; the Earl of Douglas was created Duke, and invested in the Dukedom of Touraine; and Stuart, son to the Earl of Lennox, was created Viscount d'Aubigné.

The first check given to King Henry's career, was the signal victory obtained by the Scots at Bauge*, under the Earl of Buchan, in which the Duke of Clarence, King Henry's brother, was killed, and his kinsmen, the Earls of Somers† and Dorset, were taken prisoners.

This event made King Henry sensible, that his detaining the young King of Scots a prisoner, prevented not his subjects from fighting for their allies. He changed his plan; James was carried to France, in order to detach the Scots from the Dauphin's army. An offer is said, by the Scottish historians, to have been made by King Henry to his prisoner, of restoring him to his liberty, on condition of drawing off his subjects, by summoning them, upon their allegiance, to attend his standard. In James's situation, the offer was trying and alluring. The young King's answer was remarkable: 'As a prisoner,' replied he, 'and
' in

* 1420.

† Grandson to John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and brother to the Lady Jane, afterwards James's Queen.

re A DISSERTATION ON

‘ in your hands, I have no power over my sub-
‘ jects; nor are they under any allegiance to obey
‘ my command *.’

King Henry, though nowise pleased with the answer, is said, upon the King of Scots retiring, to have exclaimed, ‘ Happy shall be the subjects of
‘ a King, who, in such tender years, shews himself
‘ to be endowed with so much wisdom †’

This prevented not James from giving his personal assistance, and signalizing himself under the banner of that heroic and martial Prince, particularly at the siege of Dreux, where the King of Scots commanded, and whose surrender was chiefly owing to his valour and conduct †. James being of a firm and vigorous constitution, expert in athletic and warlike exercises, distinguished himself in several military exploits under that vigorous Prince, fighting at the head of a faithful and noble band of his countrymen, who voluntarily attended their sovereign, as a guard to his person †.

During

* Boet. lib. 16. Hauthornden, &c.

† Hauthornden.

‡ The most eminent of this loyal band of knights, were Seton Lord Gordon, with 40 lances and 100 horsemen;
the

During the regency of Robert Duke of Albany, the King's uncle, that artful Prince's plan of keeping hold of the government of Scotland coinciding with King Henry's measure for detaining the King of Scots in his hands, every treaty set on foot for his liberty, and his return to his own kingdom, was evaded and disappointed while Robert lived.

Upon his death, his son Murdoch succeeded him in the regency*. Although the plan of the new regent was the same with that of his predecessor, yet his ability, mean in comparison of his father's, and other circumstances concurring, made him, in a few years, sensible of his being unequal to hold the reins of government of a bold and martial people. His weakness and bad administration had introduced universal licentiousness and disorder; anarchy prevailed over the whole kingdom. Above all, the vices and intolerable insolence of the regent's own sons, which he found himself unable to curb, drove him at length seriously to concur with the states of the kingdom to set on foot a treaty for
the

the Lord Forbes, with the same number; John and Fergus Kennedies, ancestors of the Earls of Cassillis, and John Sinclair, each of these with 30 launces, and 6 horsemen; *Rymer's fœdera, tom. 10. p. 127.*

* 1420.

the King's liberty. To this the English regency, Henry V. being now dead, and his son an infant, was not averse. At last the treaty for King James's liberty was finally settled; and, as a bond of union between the kingdoms, James espoused a Princess of the blood-royal of England, Jane, daughter to the Earl of Somerset, grandson to John of Gaunt, and granduncle to King Henry. Thus, after 18 years captivity *, King James set out with his young Queen for his own kingdom, and, to the universal joy of his subjects, they were crowned at Scone.

This Princess, who is the subject of one of the following poems, is celebrated by all the Scottish writers, not only as eminent for her beauty, but as a pattern of virtue and of conjugal affection.

James had an arduous task to perform upon his entry to government. The feudal system, early introduced into Scotland, made it no easy matter for the King to contend with a set of powerful nobles, possessed of great estates, extensive vassallages, and hereditary jurisdictions annexed to them. These vassals, ready to run to the standard of their chief in time of war, obeyed also his call in time of peace;

* 1424.

peace; and, as his whole revenue was spent among them, according to the ancient hospitality of the times, his castle was always open to numbers of these retainers. They looked upon the chief as protector of the clan, and the vindicator of their feuds and quarrels; and, as the principles of right and wrong were not always the directors of their actions, their quarrels often produced the most open violation of justice, equity, and law, in the attacks which they frequently made upon the persons and property of whoever they conceived had injured them. The chief, upon his part, particularly under the late weak government, as often interposed his power in protecting his guilty vassal from the punishment he had incurred. Thus, without having recourse to law and justice, the sword was the sole judge and decider of right and wrong.

A practice likewise, very expressive of the weakness of the regent's government, was then frequent among the great barons in Scotland; this was, the forming of leagues * and bonds of association with each other, in defiance of government, to defend themselves from being brought to justice. Such was the state of his kingdom, at James's taking

* Act 30. parl. 1.

taking the reins of government into his hands ; and, to add to the difficulties he had to encounter, he found the property of the crown almost wholly alienated and given away by the late regents.

The conduct of James, in this situation, showed great resolution, as well as eminent political abilities. He convened the states of his kingdom in parliament, and, with their concurrence, he resumed the patrimony of the crown *. He pledged himself to maintain their just rights, and to have justice enforced, and a strict obedience to the laws of his kingdom preserved ; and he obliged them to renounce and abjure all unlawful leagues and associations †.

James has been censured for his severity, in bringing to trial his uncle, Murdoch Duke of Albany, and his two sons. It is certain, that, on the King's return to Scotland, his government had been frequently disturbed by insurrections, headed by the regent's sons, and their partizans, who had been pardoned, in hopes to bring them to their duty. Upon what species of treason Duke Murdoch and his sons were tried and condemned,

is

* Act. 9. of parl. 1.

† Act 30. parl. 2.

is not known; there is no record of their trial*. Their death, however, seems to have been grateful to the nation: They must have been extremely unpopular, when the people appeared to be pleased with their fate. Possibly the remembrance of the death of Prince David, and of James's long captivity, brought about by the same means, might have operated in their downfall.

It is not my design to enter into a detail or history of King James's reign; for this I must refer my reader to the historians and writers of his life. It is sufficient here to say, that, in his short reign of thirteen years, he reformed the disorders which the late regent's bad government had produced; and, by his wise laws, and steady resolution and authority in putting them in execution, he restored peace, order, and security over the whole of his kingdom.

By promoting literature, he, by his own example, civilized his people; and in that rude age gave a new turn to the genius of Scotland.

He rebuilt and restored the cathedral church, and liberally endowed the University of St An-

C

drews,

* Hauthornden.

draws, and established schools in different parts of the kingdom. According to his elegant biographer *, by his invitation, many learned men, from the most illustrious universities in Europe, came to Scotland, as to the *Sanctuary of the Muses*, where the King often graced in person their lessons, and was umpire in their learned disputes.

Sensible that religion is the surest foundation of good government, and the great curb to the passions and disorders of men, he bent his care to promote piety and learning in the church, by advancing men of that character only, to the dignified ecclesiastical offices. He established a fixed rule, that none should hold the office of a canon in the church, but regular bachelors of divinity.

Sensible, likewise, that the externals of religion, in the order, decency, and solemnity of its rites, have their effect upon the mind, he, from his skill in poetry and music, established regular choirs in the churches. He was the first who introduced organs into the cathedrals and abbeys in Scotland. He was no less studious to polish the rough manners of his people, by alluring his nobles to frequent his court, where polite entertainments, feasts, masks,

* *Hauthornden.*

THE LIFE OF JAMES I. 19

trunks, and, of course, splendid apparel came to be introduced, and a degree of refinement promoted, to which the Scots, in the preceding ages, had been entirely strangers.

The most important aeras in the history of any nation, are those which mark the introduction of learning and the polite arts, and the consequent civilization of manners amongst a rude people.

The most distinguished of such epochs in the history of Scotland, are those of the reigns of *Malcolm III.* commonly called *Caenmore*, and of *King James I.* *

In the age of Malcolm III. the Scots were, no doubt, a rude people. They had little intercourse with the nations on the Continent, not even with their neighbours of England, unless in their frequent hostilities with each other.

On the murder of King Duncan by Macbeth †, his eldest son Malcolm took refuge in England, in
the

* King Malcolm III. began his reign Anno 1057. King James returned from England Anno 1424.

† 1040.

the court of King Edward the Confessor, by whose assistance, under Siward Earl of Northumberland, the grandfather of Malcolm, by his mother, the daughter of Earl Siward, he defeated the usurper, and established himself upon the throne of his ancestors *. It is remarkable, that Scotland hath owed its civilization to two of its greatest and most patriotic Princes, who both of them received their education at the English court.

Before the time of King Malcolm Caenmore, the universal language over Scotland, to the north of the river Forth, was *the Gaelic*. Malcolm, while he resided at the court of King Edward, had made himself master of the Saxon, or English language. On his return to Scotland, he introduced that language into his kingdom. He was the first of the Scottish Princes who fixed his residence in the low country of Scotland. The more ancient Scottish Kings usually held their residences at their castles, in the northern and western parts of Scotland; at *Kildrimmie in Marr*; the *castle of Inverness*, in that county; *Dunstaffnage*, on the western coast of Argyleshire; the *castle of Glamis*, in Angus; and at *Stirling* and *St Johnston*, now *Perth*, the two last situated in the *entries* of the *Grampian Mountains*.

That

* 1057.

That noble edifice, the *Abbey* and *royal palace* of *Dunfermline*, on the north of the river Forth, built by King Malcolm, was his chief residence*.

A remarkable occurrence, soon after his restoration, greatly contributed to the cultivation of the English language in Scotland.

Edgar Atheling, the heir of the Saxon line to the English crown, together with his mother and sister, and many illustrious persons, the followers of their fortunes, having, upon the conquest of England by William the Norman, left that kingdom, were driven by a storm into the mouth of the river Forth. There they found an hospitable reception from the Scottish Prince. Malcolm espoused the Princess Margaret, and endowed with honours and lands their illustrious friends. From these last, are derived many of the present noble families in Scotland. By this intercourse, the Saxon, or English language, was established, and, in time, became the general language over the low country

* The cathedral church of St Cuthberts at Durham was also built by King Malcolm. The counties of Northumberland, Cumberland, and Westmoreland, then belonged to the crown of Scotland, as feus holden of the Kings of England.

country of Scotland. With the language, it is not to be doubted that the more advanced and civilized manners, together with the arts and sciences then in England and on the Continent, came into Scotland, and were cherished and cultivated under the patronage and protection of King Malcolm, and his Queen Margaret, who, according to the Scottish historians, were two of the most illustrious characters that flourished in that age. To return to King James.

The luxury said to have been introduced into Scotland in his reign, was the natural attendant on the civilization of manners then established by him. A change in the mode of living among a rude people, from some degree of barbarity to simple convenience, will be dignified with the appellation of Luxury. *Boetius*, and other historians of these times, expatiate upon the luxury which was then introduced into Scotland, and, according to them, occasioned the enacting of sumptuary laws, particularly restraining the expence of the table, prohibiting baked meat, and such like dainties, to be used, except at the tables of the nobles, and there only upon holidays. Some modern critics treat this with great *ridicule*, and are very severe upon Boece, Hauthornden, &c. for pretending

ing absurdly and *falsely*, as they alledge, to represent the Scots, at that early period, as opulent, and addicted to luxurious entertainments. True it is, indeed, that, amongst the printed acts of parliament of that reign, the sumptuary act alluded to by Boece is not to be found. The fact may, nevertheless, be true. To confute our old historians, the following record from Rymer's *foedera* * is quoted with great triumph. In it we find a license granted by King Henry VI. for transporting by sea to Scotland the following articles, for the use of King James I. viz. ‘ *Uno cloath sack ; duodecim ulnis de scarlatto ; viginti ulnis de worsted, rubri coloris ; octo duodenis vasorum de peuter ; mille et ducentis ciphis ligneis ; tribus duodenis de Coverlis,*’ &c.

With submission to our modern critics, I cannot think even this commission, plain and homely as it may seem at this day, sufficient to discredit the authority of Boetius, as to the introduction of what might be reckoned, at that time, luxury of the table and dress, into Scotland. A sack or bale of English broad cloth, 12 ells of scarlet, for the King's own use, and 20 butts of wine, which is also in the grant, was no such contemptible

* Tom. 10. p. 479.

tible commiffion ; nor was even eight dozen of pewter veffels, for the ufe of his table. Pewter was then a novelty even in England, and ufed in the houfes of the great only, where plate likewife was ufed. By the houfehold-book of the Duke of Northumberland, it appears, that, in King Henry VII.'s time, more than 100 years after the above aera, pewter was ufed in that family, then the moft opulent in England ; but, what is remarkable, it alfo appears that it was lent out to them for hire*.

It may feem ridiculous, that, in that rude age, when the arts of induftry were very little underftood or praftifed, when not only moft of the articles of drefs, but of houfehold-furniture, ufed by the great, muft have been imported from foreign parts, a more pernicious fpecies of luxury than that of the table fhould then have been introduced into Scotland. How abfurd, (may a modern fay), to imagine, that our rude anceftors, in the beginning of the fifteenth century, not only *ate baked meat at Christmas*, and other holidays, but to go a ftain higher, *wore filk clothes, pearls, and embroidery!* The fact, however, is certainly fo. The 118th act of James I. enacts, ‘ That na man fall
‘ wear

* Hume's hift. vol. 3. note at the end, 8vo edit.

' wear *claiiths of silk, nor furrings*, bot only knights
 ' and lords of L. 200, at the least, of yearly rent,
 ' and their eldest fons, and their heirs, but special
 ' leave of the King askit and obteinit; and na
 ' uther *wear broderie, pearle, or bulzion*; bot ar-
 ' ray them at their awin list, in all uther honest
 ' arraiements, as serpes, belts, broches, and chein-
 ' zies.'—After all, it is obvious, from the cir-
 cumstances and history of the times, which later
 writers seem not to have attended to, that civili-
 zation of manners, a remarkable change in the
 mode of living, and a degree of luxury and of ex-
 pence, both in the oeconomy of the table and in
 drefs, amongst the nobility and gentry of Scot-
 land, beyond what was ever known before, must
 necessarily have taken place in the reign of James I.
 It is said above, that, at this aera, France was the
 theatre of glory, on which the Scots had eminent-
 ly figured, where, for their gallant behaviour, they
 had been rewarded with distinguished honours and
 estates. Upon their return to Scotland, must not,
 of course, part of the French manners, the refine-
 ments of living, and expence of drefs, have come
 in their train? Scotland, at that aera, we may
 readily allow, was far behind her neighbours of
 England and France in these respects; but can it
 be doubted that King James, educated, and resi-

ding so many years in the two most polished courts in Europe; that the *Earl of Buchan, constable of France*; the *Earl of Douglas, Duke of Touraine*, and *his son Lord Wigton, both marshals of France*, and numbers of the Scottish nobility and gentry, endowed with ample revenues in France, and possessed of extended territorial estates at home, on returning to their own country, would import part of the French luxury, both in dress, and in the entertainment of the table? The stately remains of the *old castles* and *venerable abbeys*, those august monuments of ancient grandeur, still extant; *Borthwick Castle, Craigmiller, Roslin*, the *abbeyes of Holyrood, Aberbrothock, Dunfermline, &c.* impress the mind, at this day, with a just idea of the splendour and hospitality of the nobles and dignified churchmen in ancient times, who held their residence in those stately edifices.

Honest Hector Boece, indeed, seldom fails to dress his countrymen in their holiday clothes: Our modern critics, on the other extreme, in their overstrained zeal for truth, seem, with reluctance, to yield to their ancestors those blessings which benignant Nature had bestowed upon them. To speak of Scotland as wealthy and opulent, according to the common phrase, would be absurd. The wealth
of

of Scotland consisted in her *population*, the certain *criterion* of *plenty*. She has been productive, at all times, of a hardy, vigorous, and brave race of men*, supplied at home with every necessary article of life, strenuous assertors of their liberty and independence against every foreign invader: Their mountains covered with sheep and beeves, their vallies fertile in grain, and their seas and rivers teeming with fish. Such was the opulence of Scotland, in ages of the earliest antiquity. At the above remarkable aera, the age of James I. from the virtue, spirit, and genius of that Prince, with the concurring circumstances of the time, it is beyond a doubt, that a remarkable change and reformation, in the manners, and mode of living of the Scots, must, of course, have taken place. To return to our subject.

Thus, while this worthy and patriot King was, by every exertion, promoting the good and happiness of his people, he was, on the 13th of February 1436--7, basely murdered at the monastery of the Dominicans at Perth, by his detestable uncle the Earl of Athol; an event universally and deeply regretted; for James was beloved and honoured
by

* Witness the numbers drawn from the mountains of Scotland, in the late and present war, to fight the battles of Britain!

by his people; and his memory is still revered, as that of one of the best of Princes that ever reigned in Scotland.

To such worthies as have been eminent for similar virtues, the Mantuan poet, in those noble strains, has allotted the chief seats in Elysium. As a poet, patriot, and lawgiver, and the civilizer of the manners of his people, no Prince in history deserves more to be revered by his country than James I. King of Scotland.

*Hic manus ob patriam pugnando vulnera passi
Quique pii vates, et Phoebæ digna locuti,
Inventas aut qui vitam excoluere per artes.*

It remains now to take notice of the works of King James I.

Joannes Major mentions some of his compositions, particularly a poem upon Jane, afterwards his Queen; and he gives the names of some of his musical pieces or Scottish songs (*Cantilenæ Scotticæ*) composed by him, which Major says were much esteemed in his time. *Dempster* mentions some other pieces of James I. *Scripsit*, says this author, *Rythmos Latinos, et de musica.*

Of

Of all his works, those which now only remain, or at least can with certainty be distinguished as his, are the two following pieces, *Christ's Kirk of the Green*, and the poem on Queen Jane, called the *King's Quair*. Of his musical compositions, I have treated by themselves, in a dissertation on the Ancient Scottish Songs.

OF CHRIST'S KIRK OF THE GREEN.

THIS ancient poem has, by men of taste, always been esteemed a valuable relique of the old Scottish poetry. For the poetical language of the time, the ludicrous descriptions, and the free vein of genuine wit and humour which runs through it, it is, even at this day, read with pleasure. It must be valuable, were its only merit that of being descriptive of the humour and manners of the country 350 years ago.

I am aware, that the generality of late writers have attributed this poem to that gallant Prince *James V.* who was also a poet. I shall examine this point; and I hope I shall be able, notwithstanding many great authorities to the contrary, to
make

make it evident, that *James L* was the author of *Christ's Kirk of the Green*.

I shall begin, by stating the authorities which give this poem to King James V.

The oldest of these, so far as I have been able to discover, is that of Bishop *Edmund Gibson*, who, Anno 1691, published an edition at Oxford of the poem of *Christ's Kirk of the Green*, with learned notes. The title which the Bishop gives his book, is 'CHRIST'S KIRK ON THE GREEN, composed, as is supposed, by King JAMES V.'—And, in an elegant Latin preface to this poem, he thus writes, '*Gratular tibi lector, et Musis, regem in Parnasso, non infeliciter somniantem; de Jacobi, ejus nominis apud Scotos Quinti, familia, eruditione, scientia militari, consulendi sunt historicorum annales; principem autem hunc poemam deperiisse, nil mirum, commune id illi, cum augustissimis aliis viris, qui haud pauci carmen in deliciis habuere.*'

The next authority is the editor of the last edition of *Gavin Douglas's translation of Virgil's Æneis*, published at Edinburgh Anno 1710, who, in his preface, thus mentions this poem; 'with notes published at Oxford some years ago, by a celebrated

‘ celebrated writer on the famous poem of King James V. entitled, *Christ’s Kirk on the Green.*’

On the same side is Tanner, Bishop of St Asaph, who, in his *Bibliotheca Britannico-Hibernica, sub voce Jacobi Quinti, Regis Scotiae*, mentions the poem of Christ’s Kirk of the Green as written by that Prince, and adds, ‘ *Edidit, notisque illustravit* ‘ *cl. Edmond Gibson, Oxon. 1691.*’ Tanner’s *Bibliotheca* was published so late as the year 1748.

These are the only ancient and positive authorities that I have seen, which attribute this poem to King James V. I shall sum up the whole arguments on that side of the question from an author of still greater weight than any of the above, that is, the learned Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes, whose opinion, although he candidly does not decide, is on the same side with the above authors*.

Lord Hailes argues thus,

First, Major, in his life of King James I. mentions several pieces written by that Prince, but says nothing of Christ’s Kirk of the Green.

Secondly,

* Notes on the statutes of King James I. Act 12.

Secondly, The poem mentions ‘*Peebles at the Play,*’ which Lord Hailes is of opinion relates to a more modern aera than the age of King James I. ; And,

Laftly, Bifhop Gibfon and Bifhop Tanner, and the editor of Gavin Douglas’s Virgil, all agree in attributing the poem of Chrif’s Kirk of the Green to King James V.

I fhall attempt to anfwer thefe arguments in their order ; and to the firft,

That Major, who mentions two or three pieces, faid to be compofed by King James I. does not mention the poem of Chrif’s Kirk, is an argument entirely negative, and can infer no direct conclufion that King James I. might not have been the author of that poem, as well as of feveral other pieces not mentioned by Major, of which, for certain, he was the author, viz. *Rythmi Latini, et de Mufica*, mentioned by Dempfter *, and fome other poems mentioned by other authors †. Major does not pretend

* *Dempfter Hift. Ecc. cap. 713.* See difertation on Scotch fongs.

† Godly and fpiritual fongs, publifhed by Andro Hart ; fome of which, though not diftinguifhed in the book, are mentioned as written by King James I.

tend to give a full enumeration of the works of James, but, after mentioning two or three of his pieces, adds, *Et plurimi codices, adhuc apud Scotos.*

To the *second*, as to the aera of the *plays of Peebles*: The anniversary games or plays at Peebles are of so high antiquity, that, at this day, it is only from tradition, joined to a few remains of antiquity, that we can form any conjecture respecting the age of their institution, or even trace the vestiges of what these games were. Any argument, therefore, deduced from the aera of the institution of the plays at Peebles, inclines to the opposite side from Lord Hailes. That this town, situated on the banks of the *Tweed*, in a pastoral country, abounding with game, was much resorted to by our ancient Scottish Princes, is certain. King Alexander III. is said to have had a hunting seat here; the place where it stood is still pointed out. We are told by Boetius, that the monastery of *Cross Church*, now in ruins, was built by that Prince*; and anciently our Princes occasionally took up their residence in the religious houses. Contiguous to it is a piece of ground, of old surrounded with walls, and still called the *King's Orchard*; and on the opposite side of the river is the King's
E
Green.

* Anno 1257.

Green *. The plays were probably the golf, a game peculiar to the Scots, foot-ball, and shooting for prizes with bow and arrow. The shooting butts still remain. Archery, within the memory of man, was kept up at Peebles; and an ancient silver prize arrow, with several old medallions appended to it, as I am informed, is still preserved in the town-house of Peebles.

And to the *last* argument, to wit, the authorities of Bishops Gibson and Tanner, and the editor of Gavin Douglas's Virgil, all of whom attribute the above poem to King James V. All these writers are so modern, and so remote from the age of James I. or even of James V. that they can prove nothing. The oldest of these writers, Bishop Gibson, did not publish his book till the year 1691, that is, 149 years after the death of King James V. and 250 years after the death of King James I. Besides Gibson, upon whose bare assertion the other two later writers professedly rely, speaks but dubiously; his words, as on the title page of the poem, are, 'Composed, *as it is supposed*, by King James V.'

Having thus shown the insufficiency of the arguments and authorities which attribute this poem
to

* Pratum regium.

to King James V. I now proceed to prove that it was undoubtedly the work of King James I.

The most ancient testimony for this opinion, is that of Mr *George Banantyne*, to whose taste and industry we owe a MS. collection of many fine old Scottish poems prior to the year 1568, which is the date of his manuscript,

In Banantyne's book, the first poem in point of antiquity, is *Christ's Kirk of the Green*, which at the end of it, as was the fashion of the time, bears this signature, '*Quod King James I.*'

Banantyne's manuscript was finished in 1568, within 26 years of the death of James V. * Banantyne may then be reckoned to have been contemporary with that Prince. His testimony, therefore, not only proves negatively that King James V. was not the author, but likewise, that universal tradition and report, in this last Prince's time, attributed this poem to his royal ancestor King James I.

Further, although it may not be easy to ascertain the age of any writing from its language, yet I apprehend there arises strong internal evidence
from

* 1542.

36 A DISSERTATION ON

from the poem itself, that it belongs to an age more ancient than that of King James V.

King James I. was carried to England in the year 1404, and remained at the courts of King Henry IV. V. and VI. until the year 1423, when he returned to his own kingdom; some years after which, we may conjecture this poem to have been written. If it is compared with any of the poems of the age of King James V. that is, a century later, we shall find the language of the first much more antiquated and difficult to be understood than that of the latter. Let us make the comparison.

In the miscellany of ancient poems, called the *Ever Green*, collected chiefly from Banantyne's manuscript, the first in the book is, *Christ's Kirk of the Green*, and next to it are two poems, the *Thistle and the Rose*, and *Virtue and Vice*. The first made by Dunbar, upon the marriage of King James IV. and Margaret his Queen, on her coming to Scotland, and before James V. was born. The other poem is written by Bellenden, Dean of Murray, and addressed to King James V. then a youth. Let these two poems be compared with *Christ's Kirk of the Green*, and I apprehend that no person who is versant in the Scottish language will have

have any difficulty in pronouncing Christ's Kirk to be the most ancient of the three poems. To any Scotfman, who is tolerably acquainted with the orthography of the Scottish language about 200 years ago, there can be no difficulty in understanding every phrase, nay almost every word used in the two poems of Dunbar and Bollanden, written in King James IV. and V.'s time, while in the more ancient poem of Christ's Kirk, he must, in almost every stanza, meet with some phrase or word, the true meaning of which he must be at a loss to explain.

I am willing, at the same time, to allow, that, in a ludicrous poem, describing the humour of the country, several words used by the vulgar may affectedly have been introduced; yet, after all, this will not reconcile or make up for the apparent antiquity of phrase, as well as of words, which runs through the whole of the poem of Christ's Kirk of the Green*.

I

* A late argument I have heard urged, that James I. from his long captivity in England, could not be so well acquainted either with the language or manners of his country, as described in this poem. In answer to this, it must be considered, that James was twelve years of age when he was carried to England; that, while there, during his captivity,

I shall conclude with another argument that arises from the poem itself, which, in my apprehension, is decisive of the point in question.

Whoever reads the poem of Christ's Kirk, simply as a piece of wit and humour, comes very far short, I imagine, of the patriotic design and intention of its author. I shall endeavour to illustrate this.

In the time of James I. *archery*, as a military art, was practised over all Europe. The English archers were remarkably expert in the use of the bow and arrow: They were commonly stationed in the van of the army, and began the fight by a flight of arrows; and, when the enemy was thrown into disorder, they rushed in upon them with their battle axes. The celebrated victory gained by King Henry V. at *Azin-court*, was decided by the English archers.

King James, on his return to his own kingdom,

tivity, he was constantly attended and surrounded with his countrymen, and, from the 1423, when he returned to Scotland, to the 1436, when he died, (13 years) in that, or half that space, he had time to have been well acquainted with both the language and manners of his people.

dom *, among many other abuses of the late weak government, under his uncles the Dukes of Albany, while he was a prisoner in England, found, that the practice of archery had been greatly neglected among his subjects. As this appeared to be an object of much importance to the state, James, in his very first parliament †, passes an act, ordaining ‘ Every person after 12 years of age
 ‘ to *busk* (*i. e.* equip) himself as *an archer* : That
 ‘ bow marks be maid near every paroch kirk,
 ‘ wharin, on holydays, men may cum and schutte
 ‘ at least thrice about, and have usage of archerie ;
 ‘ and wha sa uses not the said archerie, the laird
 ‘ of the land, or the sherriff, fall raise of him a
 ‘ wedder.’ We find another statute in the third parliament of the same Monarch, appointing *wai-pon-schawing* four times in the year, with bow and arrow.

James did not allow the matter to rest here ; he knew that *ridicule* often has a stronger effect in exposing ignorance and correcting abuses, than penalties enjoined by law †.

His

* 1423.

† Parl. 1. act 18.

‡ Ridiculum acri

Fortius et melius magnas plerumque secat res. Hor.

His poem of Christ's Kirk, is almost one continued *ironical satire* upon the *awkward management of the bow*, and the neglect into which *archery* had then fallen in Scotland. To make his subjects sensible of the disgrace they incurred by their shameful ignorance of the use of their arms, and to re-establish the discipline of the bow amongst them, was an object worthy the care of this wise and warlike Monarch. The continuator of Fordun's *Scotti-Chronicon* remarks, that, notwithstanding his attention to this, that, after his death, archery declined: ' *Post cujus mortem (Jacobi Primi) lugubrem, omnes quasi indifferenter arcus et arcilia rejecerunt, et cum lanceis equitare se dederunt: Ita quod nunc in curia magnatis, ubi sunt centum homines, et octoginta lanceas, et vix sex reperies arcitentes.*'

A remarkable discovery, made a little before this time, hastened the downfall of archery, I mean the invention of *gun-powder*, and the use of *artillery*.

The first siege of importance in which *cannon* seems to have been employed, was the famous siege of Orleans by the English, in which the Earl of Salisbury, the English general, was killed by a
cannon-

cannon-ball *. Artillery, in a few years after, was introduced into Scotland. Of this we have a melancholy proof in the death of King James II. and of the want of skill at that time in the management of artillery; that Prince being killed †, at the siege of Roxburgh-castle, by the bursting of an overloaded cannon.

The use of cannon preceded that of musketry for many years, while archery in England, and on the Continent, still continued to make a considerable figure in the military art. At length, the introduction of *hand fire-arms*, the *bagbutt*, *arquebuss*, and *match-lock*, put an end to archery, and to the use of the bow in war, about the end of the 15th century.

The 94th act of King James V. mentions, that the *schott of guns, bagbutts, and other small artillarie*, were comounlie used in war in all countries. That statute, therefore, enacts, That every landed man of L. 100 shall have a *bagbutt*, with *calmes* for *casting bullets*, and with *powder* convenient for use.

F

From

* 1428.

† 1460.

From this it appears obvious, that the use of the bow in war was, in the reign of James V. quite laid aside. The fine irony then, so proper for ridiculing the shameful want of skill in archery, which runs through the poem of *Christ's Kirk*, is lost, if applied to any other aera than that of James I. ; more particularly so, if applied to that of James V. when fire-arms were introduced and encouraged by the public laws of the kingdom. From the whole of this evidence, I think there can remain no difficulty in agreeing to the positive testimony of *Banantyne*, the contemporary of King James V. that his ancestor King James I. was the author of *Christ's Kirk of the Green*.

In the subsequent edition of this poem, I have followed Banantyne's MS. Whether or no, when he made his manuscript collection in 1568, there was any printed edition of this, or any of the other poems in his collection, I have not been able to learn.

In the following edition I have adhered scrupulously even to the orthography of Banantyne ; and I have consulted, as to the meaning of obscure and obsolete words, of which many occur, several glossaries of the Scottish language, more particularly that

that prefixed to the last folio edition of Gavin Douglas's translation of the *Æneis* of Virgil, which is said to be the work of the late learned Mr *Thomas Ruddiman*, though his modesty restrained him from putting his name to the most learned, copious, and best glossary of the Scottish language.

Bishop Edmond Gibson, as before observed, published, *anno* 1691, his edition of this poem, in the black or Saxon letter, printed at Oxford. Before this time, there were surely some Scottish editions of it printed. It appears, however, that the Bishop has followed none of them, but has taken his edition from some very incorrect copy printed in England, as it is materially different from the Scottish, not only in the orthography, but in the phrase and meaning of many passages, which it is obvious the editor has not understood.

We have already remarked, that the English and Scottish languages were derived from the same parent, the ancient Saxon. In the progress of time, however, frequent variations must of course have arisen in the same language, as spoken in the two separate kingdoms, so as to keep them distinct and separate, though radically the same language. Obsolete words from the ancient language revived;

new

new words started up; and different dialects prevailed in each kingdom. Bishop Gibson, by his Latin preface, appears to be an elegant writer in that language; and his learned notes on this poem shew that he was likewise skilled in the ancient Saxon and northern languages; yet he seems to have known little of the Scottish language, either in its phraseology or dialect, at the above aera. From a want of knowledge of the manners of that country, he palpably gives a wrong sense to many Scottish words. Many deviations from the original Scottish poem, as in Banantyne's MS. occur in his edition: Many words, even verses, are altered; and one whole stanza, the 8th in the original, is altogether omitted. There are three additional stanzas in the Bishop's edition which are not in Banantyne's MS. One of these, being the 12th of this edition, as it naturally connects with the preceding stanzas, I have taken into the text, as it seems to contain the same humour of the poem, although I hesitate to pronounce it genuine. The other two, following the 21st of the present, I take to be clearly spurious.

Of the POEM made by King JAMES I. on JANE, afterwards his Queen, while he was a prisoner in England.

THIS ancient poem, though mentioned by several writers of the life of James I. and well known in his time, yet has lain hid for these three centuries, and probably would have shared the same fate with most of his other compositions, now lost, but for the preservation of one single manuscript copy of it, which is now in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. The title which this manuscript bears is ‘*The QUAIR, maid be King JAMES of Scotland the First, callit THE KING’S QUAIR. Maid qn. his Ma. was in England.*’

By what accident this poem came into the editor’s hands, it may be proper to give some account. Although all the Scottish writers mention King James I. as the author of many poetical pieces, yet, as in the age of James, and for a century after, printing was not introduced into Britain, it is not to be wondered that most of his pieces should now be lost.

Joannes Major, in his History of Scotland, mentions this poem of King James I. thus : ‘*Artificio-
sum*

‘ *sum libellum de Regina dum captivus erat composuit,
antequam eam in conjugem duxerat.*’

Dempster also, in his *Historia Ecclesiastica*, mentions, amongst the works of James, this poem, *Super Uxore futura*. A later writer, *Tanner* Bishop of St Asaph, in his *Bibliotheca Britannico-Hibernica*, mentions it still more particularly, under the article *Jacobus Stuartus Primus Rex Scotiae*, thus: ‘ *Lamentatio facta dum in Anglia fuit Rex.*’ It appears that Bishop *Tanner* had both seen and read this poem, as he recites the first line of it,

‘ *Heigh in the Hevynis figure circulare.*’

M. S. Bib. Bod. Selden. Archiv. B. 24. and
‘ *In fine poematis (says Tanner) Gowerum et Chaucerum mirificè laudat — Rex.*’

The above authorities concurring in mentioning this poem, and the particular reference to its being amongst the Seldenian manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, excited the editor’s curiosity to search for it. After several fruitless attempts, on his applying to an ingenious young gentleman, a student of Oxford, he undertook the task, and found the MS. accordingly. From a very accurate copy made by him, the present publication is given.

From

From the title of the poem, it may be presumed that, in the age in which it was composed, it was held in estimation by the public. The word *Quair*, in the old English language, signifies a book; hence, by way of eminence, this poem was distinguished by the title of *the King's book*; and, in that age, it must have been considered as a great work.

As to its merit, the Public, after due consideration of the age in which it was written, just beginning to emerge from that darkness that had long obscured the western hemisphere, will judge. Thus far may, I think, be said, that, for the invention and fancy, the genuine simplicity of sentiment, and the descriptive poetry which runs through it, it is a remarkable work.

The design, or theme, is the Royal poet's love for his beautiful mistress *Jane*, with whom he became enamoured while a prisoner at the castle of Windsor. The recollection of the misfortunes of his youth, his early and long captivity, the incident which gave rise to his love, its purity, constancy, and happy issue, are all set forth by way of allegorical vision, according to the reigning taste of the age of King James I. as we find from the poems of *Chaucer*, *Gower*, and *Lydgate*, his contemporaries.

The

The taste for poetical allegory and vision was derived from the Provençal writers, which probably was introduced into England by Richard I. who ranks among the most eminent of the Troubadours. It was highly in fashion in the age of Lydgate, Gower, and Chaucer, and continued to be so down to the age of *Spencer*, and the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign. Every story had its moral, and was told in the way of allegory and vision. The machinery of these poems were fiery dragons, giants, and fairies; the scenery enchanted forests, castles, and lakes. The virtues, vices, and passions were personified, and the mythology was a mixture of the Greek, Roman, Arabian, and Christian. The advancement of learning has long banished this false taste; and it cannot be denied, that perhaps the meanest modern composition, even the flimsy flowers of a monthly miscellany, will better stand the test of criticism; yet how fleetly do these short-lived embryos vanish, never to appear again, at the approach of the great visionary figures, called up by our old bards! How is the imagination carried away, in their lofty flights into the regions of fancy, adorned with the glow of genuine poetry!

In pursuing the several parts of the allegorical vision in King James's poem, perhaps it may appear

pear prolix, a fault which attends almost every allegorical poem. It might be imputed to prejudice, were I to rank our Royal poet with Chaucer, his contemporary, whose genius, like the morning-star, broke out after a long obscure night!

Chaucer, the father of English poetry, as he may be stiled the first, so he is the best poet of his time. His universal genius has comprehended, in his Canterbury Tales, the various manners and humours of every rank of men in his age and country, from his accomplished knight, who had served in the holy wars, down to the reeve, ploughman, and miller: And he has shewn the extent of his genius and learning, in almost every species of poetry, from his heroic poem of Palamon and Arcite to his ballads.—Having said this in preference of Chaucer,

I may, however, be allowed to compare the epifode of the *Court of Venus*, in the following poem of James, with the *Court of Love* of Chaucer; in which view, if I am able to judge, our poet will lose nothing by the comparifon, particularly in the pourtraiture of the mistrefs of each poet. The *Jane of King James* is painted with as much beauty, and

G

with

with more tender delicacy, than the buxom *Rosier* of Chaucer.

The *Seldenian manuscript*, from which the present copy is taken, appears to be of an old date; in many places it was not easy to find out the proper sense of the passage, and in many passages it was obviously erroneous. The writer of the old MS. seems to have been but little acquainted with classical learning; hence it appears, that he has often erroneously substituted one name in place of another, of which many gross instances occur. Many other apparent inaccuracies run through it, which, however, ought not always to be placed to the account of the transcriber: The poet himself is answerable for many liberties which he takes in his poem, which the custom of that age gave a sanction to.

Great freedom is used in the orthography or spelling, which is often various in the same word. Not unfrequently words are omitted or understood, which the reader is left to supply, so as to make out the sense of the passage.

To such as are not versant in the old poets, Chaucer, Gower, &c. the numbers of the verses will

will often appear to be unequal, as the apostrophe's, signs of contraction, elisions, and marks for the division of the syllables for the sake of the verse, which were used by the old poets, are now lost. For understanding of these, I cannot do better than recommend to the reader the excellent general rules prefixed to the learned glossary in Gavin Douglas's Virgil.

For the ease of the reader, I have divided the poem into canto's, according to the various episodes contained in it; and, throughout the whole, I have, by explanatory notes, endeavoured to render the sense, frequently obscure, as easy as was in my power. In many places I am afraid I have not been so successful as I could have wished.

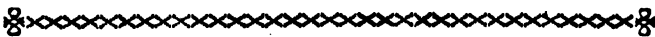
It must be confessed, that many of the beauties of this ancient poem must escape us, from the mutability of the language in the space of near 400 years; an imperfection attendant on every living language. What Waller says, in his elegant verses on Chaucer, in the last century, may, with equal force, be applied to the poetical remains of King James I. of Scotland:

Poets,

Poets, that lasting marble seek,
 Must carve in *Latin*, or in *Greek* :
 We write in sand ; our language grows ;
 And, like the tide, our work o'erflows.
Cæsar his sense can only boast,
 The glory of his numbers lost !
 Years have defac'd his matchless strain,
 And yet he did not write in vain.

Upon the whole: If the present publication, which has been the amusement of leisure hours, and a relief from more serious occupations, shall entertain the few who have a relish or esteem for the genuine poetical productions of their ancestors, it will sufficiently reward my pains, in the satisfaction I shall have of having rescued from oblivion this genuine remain of the works of a genius, one of the best and wisest of Kings ! one of the most illustrious characters of his age !

THE



T H E
K I N G ' s Q U A I R .

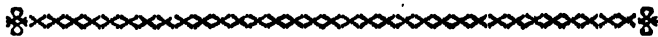
M A I D B E

K I N G J A M E S O F S C O T L A N D ,

T H E F I R S T ,

2n. his Ma. was in England.

the Prince's daughter's name 2.



0450

2-425

T H E
K I N G ' s Q U A I R .

C A N T O I .

I.

HEIGH in the hevynis figure circulare
The rody sterres twynkling as the fyre :
And in Aquary * *Citherea* the clere,
 Rynsid hir treffis like the goldin wyre,
That late tofore, in faire and fresche atyre,
 Thro' *Capricorn* heved hir hornis bright,
North northward approachit the myd nyght.

II.

Quhen as I lay in bed allone waking,
New partit out of slepe a lyte tofore,

Fell

* *Citherea*.] This must be an error of the transcriber of the Seldenian MS. The Royal Poet must have wrote *Cynthia*, which agrees with the descriptive words in the 6th line, 'Heved hir hornis bright;' but could not be applicable to *Citherea*, the planet *Venus* in that age. *Galileo*, about the year 1608, near 200 years after James I. was the first who, by the new invention of the telescope, a little before that time, discovered that the planet *Venus* had phases as the moon. The description of the season in this stanza is extremely poetical.

Fell me to mynd of many diverse thing
 Of this and that, can I not fay quharefore,
 Bot slepe for craft in erth myt I no more ;
 For quhich as tho' coude I no better wyle,
 Bot toke a boke to rede upon a quhile :

III.

Of quhich the name is clepit properly
 • Boethius, efter him that was the compiloure,
Schewing

• Boethius, whose name was *Boethius*, a senator, and of
 noble family, dwelt at Rome in the reign of *Theodoric*
 the Goth, king of Italy, the last of the Ro-
 man emperours that reigned the empire. He was accused
 of treason by *Theodoric* and *Praxas* by *Theodoric*, for
 having written concerning the liberty of his country, and
 the nature of the senses. His life and manners were
 very virtuous, and he was subject to very many of misfortunes,
 and was at length banished from Rome, and his goods were
 confiscated. He wrote his book *De Consolatione*
 in prison. His name is still preserved in the church
 of *Sanctus Boethius* at *Verona*, which is inscribed the follow-

*Boethius, senator, inquit Lavinianus, et qui
 captus erat in veris iustis in exilium,
 in veris iustis inquit, Probitas me vexit ad auras,
 in veris iustis inquit, maxima viget opus.*

Boethius's

Schewing counsele of philosophie,
 Compilit by that nobil fenatoure
 Off Rome quhilome yt was the warldis floure,
 And from estate by fortune a quhile
^a Foringit was, to povert in exile.

IV.

And there to here this worthy lord and clerk,
 His metir suete full of moralitee ;
 His flourit pen so fair he set a werk,
 Discryving first of his prosperitee,
 And out of that his infelicitee ;

H

And

Boethius's book *de Consolatione Philosophiae*, has been esteem-
 ed in every age. In the early dawn of literature in Britain,
 it was translated into the Saxon language by *K. Alfred*, sever-
 al centuries after that by *Chaucer*, and in the last century by
Lord Preston. The philosophy is excellent, conveyed, in a
 pleasant manner, as a vision, and in the form of dialogue
 between the goddess of philosophy, and the author, under
 banishment, and on the sad reverse of his fortune. Every
 dialogue is introduced by a short *Lyrical Ode*, which, for Latin-
 nity and elegance, corresponds more with the genius and
 taste of the Augustan age, than with the barbarous times of
 Theodoric, and the beginning of the sixth century.

^a *Foringit.*] Estranged from honours and estate, and re-
 duced to poverty.

Fell me to mynd of many diverse thing
 Of this and that, can I not say quharefore,
 Bot slepe for craft in erth myt I no more ;
 For quhich as tho' coude I no better wyle,
 Bot toke a boke to rede upon a quhile :

III.

Off quhich the name is clepit properly

* *Boece*, efter him that was the compiloure,
 Schewing

* *Boece.*] *Anicius Severinus Boethius*, a senator, and of consular dignity, flourished at Rome in the reign of *Theodoric* King of the Ostrogoths, after *Augustulus*, the last of the Roman emperors, had resigned the empire. He was accused and banished to Ticinum, now Pavia, by *Theodoric*, for having designs of restoring the liberty of his country, and, three years after, was beheaded. His life and manners were those of a philosopher, through a long series of misfortunes, which he bore with remarkable patience and fortitude. While he was in banishment, he wrote his book *De Consolatione Philosophiae*. His tomb is still preserved in the church of St Augustine at Pavia, on which is inscribed the following epitaph :

*Maconia et Latia lingua clarissimus, et qui
 Consul eram hic perii missus in exilium,
 Et quod mors rapuit, Probitas me vexit ad auras,
 Et nunc sama viget, maxima viget opus.*

Boethius's

Schewing counsele of filosofophye,
 Compilit by that nobil fenatoure
 Off Rome quhilome yt was the warldis floure,
 And from estate by fortune a quhile
^a Foringit was, to povert in exile.

IV.

And there to here this worthy lord and clerk,
 His metir suete full of moralitee ;
 His flourit pen so fair he set a werk,
 Discryving first of his prosperitee,
 And out of that his infelicitee ;

H

And

Boethius's book *de Consolatione Philosophiae*, has been esteem-
 ed in every age. In the early dawn of literature in Britain,
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 banishment, and on the sad reverse of his fortune. Every
 dialogue is introduced by a short *Lyric Ode*, which, for Lati-
 nity and elegance, corresponds more with the genius and
 taste of the Augustan age, than with the barbarous times of
 Theodoric, and the beginning of the sixth century.

^a *Foringit.*] Estranged from honours and estate, and re-
 duced to poverty.

And than how he in his ^b poetly report,
In philofophy ^c can him to confort.

V.

For quhich tho^t I in purpose at my boke,
To borowe a flepe at thilk time began,
Or ever I ^d stent my best was more to loke
Upon the writing of this nobil man,
That in himself the full recover ^e wan
Of his infortune, poverti, and distresse,
And in tham set his verray ^f seckernesse.

VI.

And so the vertew of his zouth before
Was in his age the ground of his delytis :
Fortune the bak him turnyt, and therefore
He makith joye and confort yt he quitis
Of their unfekir warldis appetitis,
And

^b poetly report.] This is exactly copied from the MS. As Boethius introduces every chapter of his book with a lyric ode, our author means by the above, his poetical report, or theme. Such licenes of making new words, for the sake of the verse, are not unfrequent with our poet, and others of that age.

^c Can him to confort.] Was able to comfort himself.

^d Stent.] Stopt or paused.

^e Wan.] Won, gained.

^f Seckernesse.] Security, firmness, certainty.

And fo *g* aworth he takith his penance,
And of his vertew maid it fuffifance.

VII.

With mony a nobil refon as him likit
Enditing in his fair latyne tong,
So full of fruyte, and *b* rethorikly pykit,
Quhich to declare my *i* fcole is over zong;
Therefore I lat him pas, and in my tong
Procede I will agayn to my *k* fentence
Of my mater, and leve all incidence.

VIII.

The long nyt beholding, as I faide,
Myn eyne gan to smert for studying;
My boke I fchet, and at my hede it laide,
And doun I lay, bot ony taryng,
This mater new in my mynd rolling,
This is to feyne how yt eche eftate,
As Fortune lykith, thame will tranflate.

IX.

g Aworth.] Worthily.

b Rethorickly pykit.] Rethorically chosen.

i My fcole.] My learning.

k Sentence.] I will proceed with my theme, or fubject.

IX.

For sothe it is, yt, on her ^l tolter quhele,
 Every wight ^m cleverith in his stage,
 And failyng foting oft quhen hir ⁿ lest rele
 Sum up, sum down, is non estate nor age
 Ensured more, the Prynce than the page,
 So uncouthly hir ^o werdes she divideth,
 Namely in zouth, that feildum ought provideth,

X.

Among thir thoughtis rolling to and fro,
 Fell me to mynd of my fortune and ^p ure,
 In tender zouth how sche was first my fo,
 And est my frende, and how I gat ^q recure

Of

^l *Tolter quhele.*] Tottering wheel of Fortune.

^m *Clivereth.*] Cliveth or clings to—or, perhaps, clambereth, or climbs.

ⁿ *Least rele.*] Least motion.—Least signifies to will or incline, in old writings.—It may therefore read, When Fortune inclines to turn her wheel.

^o *Hir werdes.*] Her gifts, destinies, or wiers.

^p *Ure.*] Or *Ere*, trouble. Hence *urjesum*, G. Doug. p. 450, l. 6. Hence also *Irie*, *Irkie*, *Iresum*; from the Gaelic *Earadh*, fear.

^q *Recure.*] Recourse, relief.

Of my distresse, and all my *r* aventure
 I gan ourhayle, yt langer slepe ne rest
 Ne myt I nat, sa were my wittis *s* wrest.

XI.

t For-wakit and *u* for-wallouit thus musing,
 * Wery for-lyin, I leftnyt fodaynlye,
 And sone I herd the bell to matins ryng,
 And up I rafe na langer wald I lye;
 Bot now *y* how trowe ze suich a fantasye
 Fell me to my mynd, yt ay me thot the bell
 Said to me, *z* Tell on man, quhat the befell.

XII.

r *Aventure.*] All the incidents of my life I began to re-
 collect.

s *Wrest.*] Wrested, or tortured.

t *For-wakit.*] Kept awake; or *wakerise*, according to
 the Scottish phrase.

u *For-wallouit.*] Wearied; tired; in ill plight, G. D.
 p. 201. l. 5.

* *Wery For-lyin.*] Weary of lying in bed, G. D. p. 330.
 l. 5.

y *How trowe ye.*] How think ye?

z *Tell on, man.*] Proceed to rehearse.

XII.

a Thot I tho' to myself, quhat may this be?
 This is my awin ymaginacion,
 This is no b lyf yt spekis unto me,
 It is a bell or that impressioun
 Of my thot causith this illusioun,
 That dooth me think so nycely in this wise.
 And so befell as I schall zou c devise.

XIII.

Determyt furth therewt in myn entent,
 d Sen I thus have ymagynit of this soun,
 And in my tyme more ink and paper spent
 e To lyte effect, I tuke conclusioun
 Sum new thing to write; I fet me down,
 And furth wt all my pen in hand I tuke,
 f And maid a + and thus begouth my buke.

XIV.

a *Thot I.* Abbreviation for *Thought I.*

b *It is no lyf.*] It is no living person.—This figure is often used by our poet.

c *Devise.*] Advise, or explain.

d *Sen.*] Since.

e *Lyte.*] Little.—*I tuke conclusioun,* I concluded; determined.

f *And maid a +.*] Made the sign of the Holy Cross.—

James

XIV.

Though zouth of nature indegest,
 Unrypit fruyte wt windis variable,
 Like to the bird yt fed is on the nest,
 And can not flee, of wit wayke and unstable,
 To fortune both and to infortune *g* hable,
b Wist thou thy payne to cum and thy travaille,
 For sorow and drede wele myt thou wepeand waile.

XV.

James was a religious prince, and, as was the custom of the time, thought it becoming in him thus to call for the Divine aid, or a benediction upon his work.

g *To infortune hable.*] Liable to misfortune.

b *Wist thou thy payne to cum.*] Knewest thou thy pain to come—Well might'st thou weep and wail—Thus thy comfort stands in thy uncertainty or ignorance of the future. The reader will not be displeas'd to see this principle illustrated in the richest glow of poetry.

Heaven from all creatures hides the book of fate,
 All but the page prescribed, their present state,
 From brutes what men, from men what spirits know,
 Or who would suffer being here below ?
 The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day ;
 Had he thy reason, would he skip and play ?
 Pleas'd to the last he crops the flowery food,
 And licks the hand just rais'd to shed his blood.
 Oh blindness ! to the future kindly given,
 That each may fill the circle mark'd by heaven.

Essay on Man.

XV.

Thus stant thy confort in *i* unsekernesse,
 And wantis it, y^t fuld the reule and gye,
 Ryt as the schip that failith *k* stereless,
 Upon the rok most to harmes hye,
 For lak of it y^t fuld bene her supplye;
 So standis thou here in this warldis rage,
 And wantis y^t fuld gyde all thy viage.

XVI.

I mene this of myself, as in partye,
l Though nature gave me suffisance in zouth,
 The rypenes of reson lak I
 To governe with my will, so lyte I couth,
 Quhen stereless to travaille I begouth,
 Among the wavis of this world to drive,
 And how the case anon I will describe.

XVII.

With doubtfull hert, among the rokkis blake,
 My feble bote full fast to stere and rowe,
 Helpless

i Unsekernesse.] Uncertainty.

k That saileth stereless.] Without a steersman at the helm.

l Though nature gave me suffisance, or sufficient reason
 for my years, yet lack I the rypenes of reason or experience
 to govern my will.

Helpless alone the wynter ny^t I wake,
 To wayte the wynd y^t furthward ^m fuld me throwe.
 O empti faile! qubare is the wynd fuld blowe
 Me to the port qubare gyneth all my ⁿ game?
 ° Help, Calyope, and wynd, in Marye name!

XVIII.

p The rokkis clepe I, the prolixitee
 Of doubtfulnesse y^t doith my wittis pall,
 The lak of wynd is the difficultee,
 In-enditing of this lytill trefy small:
 The bote I clepe, the mater hole of all,
 My wit unto the faile' y^t now I wynd,
 q To feke conyng, tho I bot lytill fynd.

I

XIX.

m Suld me throwe.] The favourable gale that should attend
 me through my voyage. The poet here paints his situation,
 with great propriety, under the poetical allusion of a skiff in
 the middle of the ocean.

n Where gyneth all my game.] May not the poet have
 written, *Where beginneth all my gain?* although this doth not
 quite agree with the metre, in which he generally is very
 exact.

o Help Caliope, and Marye.] This strange mixture of hea-
 then and Christian mythology is very common with the an-
 cient bards.

p The explication of the foregoing allusion.

q To feke conyng.] Invention; wit.

XIX.

At my begynning first I clepe and call
 r To zou Clio and to zou Polyme,
 With ' Thesiphone goddis and sistris all,
 In nowmer IX. as bokis specifye,
 In this processe my wilsum wittis ' gye,
 And with zour bryt lanternis wele convoye
 My pen to write my turment and my joye.

THE

r *Polyme.*] For Polymnia, the Muse of Harmony.—Our poet, with the old bards, use great freedom with proper names, for the sake of verse.

s *Thesiphone.*] The transcriber has here made a very gross blunder, in substituting Thesiphone, one of the Furies, in place of Terpsichore, one of the nine Muses, which our poet expressly here invokes.

t *Gye.*] Guide.

T H E

K I N G ' s Q U A I R :

C A N T O I I .

His intended Voyage to France.

L

IN vere y^t full of vertu is and gude,
Quhen nature first begyneth hir * enprise,
That quhilum was be cruel frost and flude,
And schouris scharp opprest in mony wise;
And * Synthius gyneth to aryse
Heigh in the est, a morrowe soft and suttie,
Upward his course to drive in Ariete.

II.

Passit bot myd-day foure greis evin
Of lenth and brede his angel wingis bryt,

He

† In vere.] In the spring:

‡ Enprise.] When nature begins to exert her powers.

** And Synthius, &c.]* When the sun enters into the sign
Aries, or the middle of March.—The description of the sea-
son, in these two stanzas, is very poetical.

He spred upon the ground down fro the hevin,
 That for gladneſſe and confort of the fight,
 And with the tiklyng of his hete and light,
 The tender flouris opynit thame and ſprad,
 And in thair nature thankit him for glad.

III.

Not far paſſit the ſtate of innocence
 Bot nere about the nowmer of zeiris thre,
 Were it cauſit throu hevinly influence
 Of Goddis will, or other caſualtee,
 Can I not ſay, bot out of my contree,
 By thair aviſe y^t had of me the cure
 Be ſee to pas, tuke I my aventure.

IV.

[*Paſſit the ſtate of innocence three years.*] This is a vague manner of expreſſing his age. Bellenden, arch-dean of Murray, the tranſlator of Boethius, by deſire of King James V. ſays James I. was ~~nine years old when he was taken priſoner~~ in March 1404-5. This does not agree with our other hiſtorians, who ſay he was forty-four years old when he was killed Anno 1436. Suppoſing, by our Poet's own account, that he was three years paſt nine, or the age of innocence, he was at this time twelve years of age, which nearly agrees with the generality of the hiſtorians, none of whom, however, that I have ſeen, mention the year in which K. James was born.

IV.

z Purvait of all y^t was us necessarye,
 With wynd at will, up airely by the morowe,
 Streight unto schip no longere wold we tarye,
 The way we tuke the tyme I tald to forowe,
 With mony fare wele, and ^a Sanct Johne to borowe
 Of falowe and frende, and thus w^t one assent,
 We pullit up faile and furth our wayis went.

V.

Upon the wevis weltring to and fro,
 So infortunate was we that ^b fremyt day,
 That maugre plainly quethir we wold or no,
 W^t strong hand by forse schortly to fay^e,
 Of inmyis taken and led away,
 We weren all, and bro^t in thaire contrée,
^c Fortune it schupe non othir wayis to be.

VI.

z *Purvait.*] Provided.

^a *Sanct John to borowe.*] Saint John be your protector,
 or cautioner. *Borowe* signifies a pledge.—It appears to have
 been an ordinary benediction.

^b *Fremyt day.*] Strange, adverse day.

^c *Fortune it schupe.*] Fortune shaped, or cut out.

VI.

d Quhare as in strayte ward, and in strong prison,
So fere forth of my lyf the hevvy lyne,

W^tout

d Our author here may be thought to use his poetical license, in exaggerating the strictness of his confinement during his captivity in England. The following *mandates* of Henry IV. and V. concerning *James's confinement*, sufficiently vindicate the King of Scots' complaint on that head :

Hollingshed says, that, on James's being captured on the coast of England, he and his attendants (the Earl of Orkney and others) were sent prisoners to the Tower of London. After this we have the following orders, concerning his confinement, from *Rymer's Foedera* :

“ *De filio Regis Scotiae custodiendo.*

“ Rex Constabulario Turris suae Londoniae. Salutem.

“ Mandamus vobis quod *filium Regis Scotiae,*
et *Griffinum ap Glendorchy,* in Turri praedicta sub custodia vestra existentes, dilecto et fideli nostro, Ricardo Domino de Grey deliberetis, usque *castrum Nottingamiae ducendos,* ibidem quousque aliud pro ipsorum deliberatione duxerimus demandandum custodiendos.

“ Teste Rege apud Westmonasterium decimo die Junii
1407.

“ Per ipsum Regem.”

Rymer, tom. 8. p. 484.

On the accession of K. Henry V. to the throne, we have the following order :

“ Henricus,

“ Henricus, Dei gratia, &c. Constabulario Turris suae Londoniae. Salutem.

“ Mandamus vobis, quod *Jacobum Regem Scotiae*, Mor-dok Comitem de Fife, et Willielmum Douglas de Dalketh, et Willielmum Giffard Armigerum, ab eo qui ipsos vobis ex parte nostra liberavit, recipiatis, et ipsos, *in Turri praedicta salvó et securé*, quousque aliud a nobis inde habueritis, in mandatis custodiri faciatis.

“ Teste meipso apud Westmonasterium vig. imo die Martii Anno regni imo 1413-4.”—*Rymer, tom. 9. p.*

2.

“ Henricus REX, custodi Turris nostrae Londoniae. Salu-tem.

“ Mandamus vobis, quod *Regem Scotiae*, et Magistrum de Fitz de Scotia, in Turri praedicta, sub custodia vestra, de mandato nostro detentqs, Constabulario castri nostri de *Wyn-desore*, ibidem sine dilatione, liberetis, in castro praedicto *sal-vó et securé*, quousque pro eorum deliberatione aliter duxerimus, ordinandum custodiendos.

“ Teste Rege apud Westmonasterium tertio die Augu-sti 1414.”—*Rymer, tom. 9. p. 44.*

King Henry, from his accession to the throne, had medi-tated his invasion of France, which he accordingly put in ex-ecution in August 1415, while King James was prisoner at Windsor. Henry saw the advantage of having James in his hands, as a pledge for preventing the Scottish Regent from making incursions on the border while he was in France. In this view, the confinement of the Scottish Prince would no doubt be the clofer, during Henry's absence in his first expe-dition to France; and, probably, it was at this period, that, on viewing the beautiful Jane, in the garden under the castle

of

72 THE KING'S QUAIR.

Wtout confort in sorowe, abandoune
The e secund siftere, lukit hath to twayne,
Nere, by the space of zeris twice nyne,
Till Jupiter his merci list advert,
And send confort in relefche of my smert.

VII.

Quhare as in ward full oft I wold bewaille
My dedely lyf, full of peyne and penance,
Saing ry^t thus, / quhat have I gilt to faille,
My fredome in this world and my plesance ?
Sen every wight has thereof suffisance,
That I behold, and I a creature
Put from all this, hard is myn aventure ?

VIII.

The bird, the beste, the fisch eke in the see,
They lyve in fredome everich in his kynd;

And

of Windsor, he first became enamoured with her. We may thus fix the aera of the commencement of this poem, which it is probable was written at different times, and often interrupted, as no doubt his amour and courtship was, by his being carried to France by King Henry, in his second and third expeditions to that kingdom.

e The secund sifter.] Lachesis, one of the Parcae or Destinies, whose office it was to twine the thread of human life.

f What have I gilt.] Been guilty of, to merit the forfeiture of my freedom in the most pleasant time of my life.

And I a man, and lakith libertee
 Quhat fall I feyne, quhat refon may I fynd,
 That fortune fuld do fo? thus in my mynd,
g My folk I wold argewe, bot all for not,
 Was none that my^t y^t on my peynes rought.

IX.

Than wold I fay, Giff God me had devisit
 To lyve my lyf in thraldom thus and pyne,
 Quhat was the caufe y^t he more me *b* comprifit,
 Than othir folk to lyve in fuch ruyne?
 I suffere alone amang the *i* figuris nyne,
 Ane wofull wrache y^t to no wight may spede,
 And zit of every lyvis help has nede.

X.

The long dayes and the nyghtis eke,
 I wold bewaille my fortune in this wife,
 For quhich again distrefse confort to feke,
 My custum was on mornis for to rise
 Airly as day, O happy exercife!

K

By

g My folk.] I would argue with my attendants, the Earl
 of Orkney and others of his train.

b Me comprifit.] That he sentenced or adjudged me.

i Of all the nine numbers, mine is the most unlucky or
 wretched.

74 THE KING'S QUAIR.

By the come I to joye out of turment,
 Bot now to purpose of my first entent *l*.

XI.

Bewailing in my chamber thus allone,
 Despeired of all joye and remedye,
 For-tirit of my thot and wo-begone,
 And to the wyndow gan I walk in hye,
 To see the warld and folk yt went forbye,
 As for the tyme though I of mirthis fude,
 My^t have no more, to luke ft did me gude.

XII.

Now was there maid fast by the Touris wall
 A gardyn faire, and in the corneris set,
l Ane herbere grene, with wandis long and small,
 Railit about, and so wt treis set

Was

l A fine apostrophe in praise of early morning exercise!

l *Herbere.*] From *Herbarium*—a garden-plot set with plants and flowers—a grove with an arbour, railed with trellis-work, and close set about with trees. We have here a sketch of the mode or taste in gardening in the remote age of Henry V. in England. The royal garden, under the castle walls of Windsor, was laid out in flower-plots and alleys, or walks with arbours of lattice or trellis-work at the ends or corners of the walks; the whole surrounded with hawthorn hedges interspersed with juniper.

Was all the place, and hawthorn hegis knet,
 That lyf was non walkyng there forbye,
 That myt w^tin scarce any wight aspye.

XIII.

So thick the beuis and the leves grene
 Beschadit all the allyes y^t there were,
 And myddis every herbere myt be fene
 The scharp grene fuede jenepere,
 Growing so fair w^t branchis here and there,
 That, as it semyt to a lyf w^tout,
 The bewis spred the herbere all about.

XIV.

And on the small grene twistis fat
 The lytil fuede nyghtingale, and song
 So loud and clere, the ^m ympnis consecrat
 Of luis use, now soft now lowd among,
 That all the gardynis and the wallis rong
 Ry^t of thaire song, ⁿ and on the copill next
 Of thaire fuede armony, and lo the text.

XV.

m *Ympnis.*] Hymns consecrated to Love.—Ch. G. D.

n *And on they copill next.*] This seems to be obscure.—May it not be, “ Anon they copill or pair together, and join in
 “ sweet harmony, and lo the text or burden of their song ?”

Cantus XV.

Worfchippe ze yt loveris bene this May,
 For of zour blifs the *o* kalendis are begonne,
 And fing w^t us, away winter away,
 Come somer come, the fuede fefon and sonne,
 Awake, for schame! yt have *p* zour hevynis wonne,
 And amourously lift up zour hedis all,
 Thank lufe yt lift zou to his merci call.

XVI.

Quhen thai this song had fong a *q* littil thrawe,
 Thai stent a quhile, and therew^t unafraid,
 As I beheld, and kest myn eyen *r* a lawe,
 From beugh to beugh, thay hippit and thai plaid,
 And freschly in thair birdis kynd araid,
 *Thaire fatheris new, and *s* fret thame in the sonne,
 And thankit lufe, yt had thair *t* makis wonne.

XVII.

o Kalends.] The beginning of your blifs, May, the month of love.

p Zour hevynis wonne.] Ye that have attained your highest blifs, by winning your mates.—See the last line of the next stanza.

q A bytill thrawe.] A short space.

r Kest myn eyen a lawe.] Cast mine eyes below.

s Fret thame.] Raised or spread them in the sun. Thus *fret work*, or raised work.

t Thair makis.] Their mates.

XVII.

This was the plane ditie of thaire note,
 And therew^t all unto myself I thot,
 " Quhat lufe is this, that makis birdis dote?
 Quhat may this be, how cummyth it of ought?
 Quhat nedith it to be fo dere ybought?
 It is nothing, trowe I, bot * feynit chere,
 y And that one list to counterfeten chere.

XVIII.

Eft wold I think, O Lord, quhat may this be?
 That lufe is of fo noble my^t and kynde,
 Lufing his folk, and fuich prosperitee
 Is it of him, as we in bukis fynd,
 May he oure hertis fetten and unbynd:
 Hath he upon our hertis fuich maistraye?
 Or all this is bot feynit fantasye?

XIX.

u What lufe is this.] What love can this be?

x Feynit chere.] Feigned mirth or chearfulness.

y And that one list.] The sense here is obscure. I suspect there may be an error in the word *one list*, in place of *me list*, which list me, or inclines me to think it may be only counterfeited *chere*, or *mirth*.

The King's confinement, one would think, must have been very strict, and his time wholly engrossed by study, that, before this, he had never felt the flame of love.

XIX.

For gif he be of fo grete excellence,
 That he of every wight hath cure and charge,
 Quhat have I gilt to him, or doon offense?
 That I am ^z thrall, and birdis gone at large,
 Sen him to serve he myt fet my corage,
 And, gif he be not fo, than may I feyne
 Quhat makis folk to jangill of him in veyne?

XX.

Can I not ellis fynd bot gif yt he
 Be lord, and, as a god, may lyve and regne,
 To bynd, and loufe, and maken thrallis free,
 Than wold I pray his blisful grace benigne,
^a To habile me unto his service digne,
 And evermore for to be one of tho
 Him trewly for to serve in wele and wo.

XXI.

And therewt kest I doun myn eye ageyne,
 Quhare as I saw walkyng under the Toure,

Full

^z That I am thrall-prisoner.

^a *To habile.*] To enable me; make me fit.

Full secretly, new cumyn hir ^b to pleyne,
 The fairest or the freschest zoung floure
 That ever I sawe, methot, before that houre,
 For quhich sodayne ^c abate, anon ^d astert,
 The blude of all my body to my hert.

XXII.

And though I stood abaisit tho a lyte,
 No wonder was; for quhy? my wittis all
 Were so ouercome w^t plesance and delyte,
 Only through lating of myn eyen fall,
 That fudaynly my hert become hir thrall,
 For ever of free wyll, for of ^e manace
 There was no takyn in hir fuede face.

XXIII.

b Cumyn hir to pleyne.] Coming forth to make her morn-
 ing oraisons. To pray, petition, playn, or complain, are
 used in the same sense. Thus G. Douglas, Prol. to 13.
Æneid:

“ The lark descendis from the skyis hicht,
 “ Singand hir complene sang astir hir gifte,
 “ To tak hir rest.”——

c Sodayne abate.] Suddenly I was cast down, and deject-
 ed. From the Fr. *abbatu*.—*Abaisit*, in the next stanza, is de-
 rived from the same original.

d Anon astert.] And then or immediately started the
 whole blood of my body to my heart.

e For of manace.] For, of forbidding pride or haughti-
 nefs—She had nothing in her sweet countenance.—*Manace*,
 or *minace*, from the Lat. *minare*.

XXIII.

And in my hede I drew ryt hastily,
 And eft fones I lent it out ageyne,
 And faw hir walk that verray womanly,
 With no wight mo, bot only women tueyne,
 Than gan I studye in myself and feyne,
 Ah! fuede are ze a warldly creature,
 Or hevingly thing in likeneffe of nature *f*?

XXIV.

Or ar ze god Cupidis owin princeffe?
 And cumyn are to louse me out of band,

Or

f In the Prince's situation, viewing from his window, in the Tower of Windfor, the beautiful Jane walking below in the palace-garden, he could not with propriety have given a minute description of her features; but it will be difficult for imagination to form a more lovely idea of beauty than what our poet has drawn, under the figurative description of

The fairest and the freshest young floure
 That ever I saw.—

A picture expressive of beauty, health, and blooming youth! —With more propriety he describes the sweetness of her countenance, resulting from a view of the whole, without the least expression of pride or haughtiness, and the sudden passion with which her beauty inspired him. Her golden locks, and white enamelled neck, with her head-dress, attire, and ornaments, are particularly and most poetically painted in the following 27th, 28th, 29th, and 30th stanzas.

Or are ze veray Nature the goddesse,
 That have depayntit wt. zour hevinly hand,
 This gardyn full of flouris, as they stand?
 Quhat fall I think, allace! quhat reverence
 g Sall I mester to zour excellence?

XXV.

Giff ze a goddesse be, and yt ze like
 To do me payne, I may it not avert;
 Giff ze be warldly wight, ^b yt dooth me fike,
 Quhy left God mak zou so my dereft hert,
 To do a sely prifoner thus smert,
 That lufis zou all, and wote of not but wo,
 And, therefore, merci fuede! sen it is fo.

XXVI.

Quhen I a lytill thrawe had maid my mone,
 Bewailing myn infortune and my chance,
 L Unknawin

g Sall I mester.] Perhaps administer.

b That does me fike.] The word fite, or fyte, in our old language, signifies grief, or sorrow. G. D. p. 177. v. 14.—p. 184. v. 19.—It is not improbable that, for the sake of the metre, the poet may have made free with the termination. The poet seems thus to expostulate: “If thou art a goddes, I cannot resist thy power; but if only a mortal creature, God surely cannot left or incline you to grieve or give pain to a poor captive that loves you.” G. D. p. 285. v. 31.

88 THE KING'S QUAIR.

Unkwin how or quhat was best to done,
 So ferre I fallying into lufe dance,
 That fodeynly my wit, my contenance,
 My hart, my will, my nature, and my maynde,
 Was changit clene ry^t in ano other kind.

XXVII.

Of hir array the form gif I fal write,
 Toward her goldin haire, and rich styre,
 In fretwifc couchit w^t perlis quhite,
 And grete ^k balas lemyng as the fyre,
 W^t mony ane emerant and faire saphire,
 And on hir hede a chaplet fresch of hewe,
 Of plumys partit rede, and quhite, and blewe.

XXVIII.

i In fretwifc couchit.] Hid or couchit with fretwork of pearls.

k Grete balas lemyng as the fyre.] Precious stones, sparkling as fire.—*Balay* is fo called from the place whence this stone is brought, called *Balaffia* in India, situated to the north of Bengal. Urry's Gloss. on Chaucer.

"No saphire of Inde, no rubie rich of price,

"Nor emerand so grene, nor *Balas*."—

Cu. Palace of Love.

l "And on her hede a chaplet fresche of hewe,

"Of plumys partit rede, and quhite, and blewe,

"Full of quaking spangis bright as gold."—

It is pleasant to observe here the familiarity of the Princess Jane's head-dress to the mode at present used by our modern ladies,

XXVIII.

Full of quaking spangis bryt as gold,
 Forgit of schap like to the *m* amorettis,
 So new, so fresch, so pleasant to behold,
 The plumys eke like to the *n* floure jonettis,
 And other of schap, like to the floure jonettis;
 And, above all this, there was, wele I wote,
 Beautee eneuch to mak a world to dote.

XXIX.

About hir neck, quhite as the *o* fyre amaille,
 A gudelic cheyne of small *p* orfeverye,

Quhare

ladies, in adorning their heads with flowers, plumes of various colours, spangles, and jewels set in shapes of flowers.

m Forgit of shape like to the amorettis.] Made in the form of a love-knot or garland.—Thus Chaucer's description of Cupid, in the Romaunt of the Rose:

“ This God of Love of his facion—

“ —Not yclad in silk was he,

“ But all in flouris and flourettis,

“ Ypainted all with amorettis.”

n Like to the floure jonettis.] What flower our poet here alludes to I do not know: By his repeating it, he seems to be fond of the name; perhaps the *jonquil*, a May flower. Or he might have dubbed some flower, then worn by her, with the name *janetta*, in honour of his mistress the Lady Jane.

o Her neck quhite as the fyre amaille.] I suspect the last two words to be erroneously transcribed. The original probably is, “ Quhite as the fayre *anamaill*, or *enamell*.”

p A cheyne of small orfeverye.] A chain of gold-work. From the Fr. *orfèverie*.

THE KING'S QUAIR.

Quhare by there hang a ruby; *q* wtout faille
Like to ane hert schapin verily,
That, as a sperk of *r* lowe so wantonly
Semyt birtyng upon hir quhite throte,
Now gif there was gud pertye, God it wote.

XXX.

And for to walk that fresche Mayes morowe,
Ane huke she had upon her tiffew quhite,
That gudeliare had not bene sene to forowe,
As I suppose, and girt sche was alyte;
s Thus halflyng lowse for haste, to fuich delyte,
It was to see her zouth in gudelihed,
That for rudenes to speke thereof I drede.

XXXI.

In hir was zouth, beautee, wt humble apourt,
Bountee, richeffe, and womanly faiture,

God

q *A rubie without faille.*] Without flaw.

r *As a spark of lowe.*] Bright as a spark of fire, seem'd
burning upon her white neck.—A beautiful simile!

s *Thus halflyng loofe.*] This description of his mistress, in
her loose morning attire, her robe fastened with a hook or
clasp, in a negligent mode, and halflyn loose, which gave
her lover (unseen) the pleasure of spying some hidden beau-
ties, which the poet with great delicacy only hints at, is fine-
ly and modestly expressed.

God better wote than my pen can report,
 Wisdome, largesse estate, and conyng sure
 In every point, so guydit hir mesure,
 In word, in dede, in schap, in contenance,
 That nature myt no more hir childe auance †.

XXXII.

† As no doubt our poet must have seen, and had in his eye, Chaucer's Court of Love, when he wrote his own poem, for the entertainment of the reader, and by way of comparison with our poet's description of his mistress, in the foregoing stanzas, I shall transcribe, from Chaucer's Court of Love, the description which he there gives of the beauty of his mistress Rosiall :

Within ane herber and a gardein faire,
 Where flowris growe, and herbis vertuous,
 Of which the favour sweet was, and the aire—
 ———There was Rosiall, womanly to fe,
 Whose stremis sotill perfyng of her eye :
 Mine hert gan thrill for beautie in the founte,
 Alas ! quoth I, Who has me gyve this wound ?
 If I shall all fully her describe,
 Her hed was rounde, by compas of nature,
 Her here was golde she passit all on live,
 And lillie forhede had this creature,
 With livelish browis, flawe of colour pure,
 Betwene the which was mene disseveraince
 From every browe, to shewin a distaunce.
 Her nose directid streight and even as line,
 With forme and shape thereto convenient,

XXXII.

Throw quich anon I knew and understude
 Wele y^t sche was a wardly creature,

On

In which the godis milk-white path doth shine,
 And eke her eyen ben bright and orient,
 As is the * *Smaragade* unto my judgement,
 Or yet these sterris hevenly small and bright,
 Her visage is of lovely red and white.

Her mouthe is short, and slutte, in litil space
 Flamyng † sornede, not over rid I mene,
 With prenaunt lips, and thick to kifs perceace,
 For lippis thin, not fat, but ovir lene,
 They serve of naught, they be not worth a bene ;
 For if the bafe ‡ ben full, there is delite,
 Maximian truly thus doth he write.

But,

* *Smaragdus*.] An emerald.—Eyes of emerald, or green colour, cannot be beautiful. Chaucer meant only to compare his mistress's eyes in brightness to the orient emerald. The similitude, however, is not well chosen.

† *Flamyng*.] Or ruddy.

‡ *Bafe*, the kifs ; from Maximianus's *Bafia Plena* ; *ben*, or *be*, full.—Chaucer, in the whole of this description, is not over delicate. In this last of his mistress's kissing lips, he had in view, as he tells us, the first Elegy of Maximianus :

“ *Flammea dilexi, modicumque tumentia labra*

“ *Quae mihi gustanti, Bafia plena darent.*”

The *Flammea labra modicum tumentia* of Maximian are but coarsely turned into the pregnant, thick, fat lips of Chaucer's mistress.

C A N T O II.

On quhom to rest myn eye, so much gude
It did my wofull hert, I zow assure

That

But, to my purpose, I saie as white as snow
Ben all her teeth, and in order they stande
Of one stature, and eke her breth I trowe
Surmounteth all odours that er I founde
In sueteness; and her body, face, and hounde
Ben sharply slender; so that from the heede
Unto the fote, all is but womanhede.

I hold my peace, of other things hidde:

Here shall my soule, and not my tong, bewraie*.

But how she was arraied, if ye me bidde,

That shall I well discovir you and saie,
A bend of gold and silk full fresche and gaie,
With hir intresse ybrouderit full wele,
Right smothly kept, and shining every dele.

About her neck a flower of fresche devise,

With rubies fet, that lustie were to fent,
And she in gowne was light and fommeer wise,
Shapin full wele, the colour was of grent,
With aureat fent about her fidis clene,

With divers stonis precious and riche;

Thus was she raied, yet sawe I ne'er her liche.

* The modest awful passion of the Royal poet differs as much from Chaucer's, as the delicate ideal figure of his mistress Jane does from the buxom Rosal.

The reader, by comparing Chaucer's Court of Love with King James's Episode on the same subject, in the following Canto,

THE KING'S QUAIR.

That it was to me joye w^out mesure,
 And, at the last, my luke unto the hevyn
 I threwe furthwith, and said thir versis sevin :

XXXIII.

O Venus clere ! of goddis stellifyit,
 To quhom I zelde homage and sacrifise,
 Fro this day forth zour grace be magnifyit,
 That me reffaut have in such wise,
 To lye under zour law and so seruise ;
 Now help me furth, and for zour merci lede
 My hert to rest, y^t deis nere for drede.

XXXIV.

Quhen I w^t gude entent this orison
 Thus endit had, I stynt a lytill stound,
 And est myn eye full pitoussly adoun
 I kest, behalding unto hir lytill hound,
 That w^t his bellis playit on the ground,
 Than wold I say, and sigh therew^t a lyte,
 Ah ! wele were him y^t now were in thy plyte !

XXXV.

Canto, which is quite original, will find the votaries of Venus, in the last, are altogether different personages from those of Chaucer.

[In thy plyte.] Plyte, according to Chaucer, is a wreath or collar. "Happy he!" cries our poet, "that wears the chains of such a mistress!"

XXXV.

An other quhile the lytill nyghtingale,
 That fat upon the twiggis, wold I chide,
 And say ry^t thus, Quhare are thy notis smale,
 That thou of loye has song this morowe tyde?
 Seis thou not hir y^t fittis the befyde?
 Ffor Venus' fake, the blisfull goddeffe clere,
 Sing on agane, and mak my Lady * chere.

XXXVI.

And eke I pray, for all the paynes grete,
 That, for the love of y Proigne, thy suster dere,
 Thou sufferit quhilom, quhen thy breftis wete
 Were with the teres of thyne eyen clere,
 All bludy ronne y^t pitee was to here,
 The crueltee of that unknytly dede,
 Quhare was fro the bereft thy maidenhede.

XXXVII.

Lift up thyne hert, and sing w^t gude entent,
 And in thy notis fueete the trefon telle,

M

That

* *Make my Lady chere.*] Make her glad with thy song.

y *Proigne.*] Alluding to the well-known story of Tereus,
 Progne, and Philomela. *Ovid Metam. B. 6.*

90 THE KING'S QUAIR.

That to thy sifter trewe and innocent,
 Was kythit by hir husband false and fell,
 Ffor quhois gilt, as it is worthy well,
 Chide thir husbandis y^t are false, I say,
 And bid them mend in the ^z XX deuil way.

XXXVIII.

O lytill wreich, allace! maist thou not se
 Quho comyth zond? Is it now tyme to ^a wring?
 Quhat fory thot is fallin upon the?
 Opyn thy throte; ^b hastow no left to sing?
 Allace! sen thou of reson had ^c felyng,
 Now, swete bird say ones to me ^d pepe,
 I dee for wo; me think thou gynis slepe.

XXXIX.

Hastow no mynde of lufe? ^e quhare is thy make?
 Or artow seke, or smyt wt jelousye?

Or

^z XX *Deuil way.*] The sense here is obscure. Perhaps it means thus: "Bid such cruel husbands mend or repent, " by mourning twenty fold for their crimes." From the Fr. *deuil*, sorrow.

^a *To wring.*] To grieve, or be dull and melancholy.

^b *Hastow no left.*] Hast thou no desire or inclination to sing?

^c *Had felyng.*] Sense, or feeling.

^d *Say ones to me pepe.*] Give me but one chirp.

^e *Quhare is thy make.*] Thy mate, or marrow.

Or is sche dede, or hath sche the forfake?
 Quhat is the cause of thy melancolye,
 That thou no more list maken melodye?
 Sluggart, for schame! lo here thy golden houre
 That worth were hale all thy lyvis laboure.

XL.

Gif thou fuld fing wele ever in thy lyve,
 Here is, in *f* fay, the time, and eke the space:
 Quhat *g* wostow than? Sum bird may cum and ftryve
 In song w^t the, the maistry to purchace.
 Suld thou than cesse, it were great schame allace,
 And here to *h* wyn gree happily for ever;
 Here is the tyme to fyng, or ellis never.

XLI.

I thot eke thus gif I my handis clap,
 Or gif I cast, than will sche flee away;
 And, gif I hald my pes, than will sche nap;
 And, gif I crye, sche wate not quhat I fay:
 Thus quhat is best, wate I not be this day,

Bot

f *In fay.*] In faith.

g *What wostow.*] What wit'st, wotest, or knowest thou?

h *To wyn gree.*] To win the gree, or victory.—This is a
 Scottish phrase, still used with us, of which many occur in
 this poem.

92 THE KING'S QUAIR.

Bot blawe wynd, blawé, and do the leuis schaks,
That fum tuig may wag, and make hir to wake.

XLII.

With that anon ry^t sche toke up a fang,
Quhare com anon mo birdis and alight ;
Bot than to here the mirth was tham amang,
 l Ouer that to see the fuede ficht
Of hyr ymage, my spirit was so light,
Metho^t I flawe for joye w^tout areft,
 k So were my wittis bound in all to fest.

XLIII.

And to the nottis of the philomene,
 Quhilkis sche fang the ditee there I maid
Direct to hir y^t was my hertis quene,
 Withoutin quhom no fongis may me glade,
And to that sanct walking in the schade,
 l My bedis thus with humble hert entere,
Deuotly I said on this manere.

XLIV.

i Ouer that.] Moreover, to see the sweet fight of his mistress's image.

k So were all my wits or senses feasted.

l My bedis.] I devoutly said my prayers, or *pater-noster*.

XLIV.

Quhen fall zour merci / rew upon zour man,
 Quhois feruice is yet uncouth unto zow,
 Sen quhen ze go, there is not ellis than,
 Bot hert quhere as the body may not throu
 Folow thy hevin, quho suld be glad bot thou,
 That such a gyde to folow has undertake,
 Were it throu hell, the way thiou not forsake.

XLV.

And, efter this, the birdis everichone
 Take up ane other sang full loud and clere,
 And

[Rew upon.] Have pity upon.—In the beautiful pastoral of *Robyn and Makyn*, in the *Evergreen*, “O Robyn rew on me,” or have pity on me. The rest of this stanza is very obscure. “When my mistress is gone,” continues the poet, “there remains only my body, (which is here confined) bot or without my heart.” Then addressing his heart, “Folow then thy heaven, and be glad to follow such a guide, and forsake not the way she leads you.” The old bards, in the transposition of their words, seem to have been confined by no rules whatever; but a still greater licence was often taken by them, which was to omit some words altogether, and leave them to be understood, where the verse required it. Of this frequent instances occur in Chaucer and Gavin Douglas, as well as in the present poem, which I have attempted to explain or supply in the best manner I am able; though, perhaps, not always successfully.

94 THE KING'S QUAIR.

And wt a voce said, Well is vs begone,
 That with our makis are togider here ;
 We ^m proyne and play wtout dout and dangere,
 All clothit in a foyte full fresch and newe,
 In luffis service befy, glad, and trewe.

XLVI.

And ze fresch May, ay mercifull to bridis,
 Now welcum be, ze floure of monethis all,
 Ffor not onely zour grace upon us bydis,
 Bot all the warld to witnes this we call,
 That strowit hath so plainly over all,
 Wt new fresch fuete and tender grene,
 Our lyf, our ⁿ lust, our governoure, our quene.

XLVII.

This was their fang, as semyt me full heye,
 Wt full mony uncouth fwete note and schill,
 And therewt all that faire vpwart hir eye
 Wold cast amang, as it was Goddis will,
 Quhare I might se, standing alone full still,
 The faire faiture yt nature, for maistrye,
 In hir visage wrot had full lufingly.

XLVIII.

^m *We proyne.*] Or prunye; prune, trim, or deck out ourselves.—From the Fr. *brunir*, to burnish or polish. G. D.

ⁿ *Our lust.*] Desire.

XLVIII.

And, quhen sche walkit, had a lytill thrawe
 Under the fueete grene bewis bent,
 Hir faire fresch face, as quhite as any snawe,
 Sche turnyt has, and furth her wayis went;
 Bot tho began myn *o* axis and turment,
 To fene hir part, and folowe I na myt,
 Methot the day was turnyt into nyt.

XLIX.

Than said I thus, Quhar to lyve I langer?
 Wofullest wicht, and subject unto peyne:
 Of peyne? no: God wote ze, for thay no stranger
 May wirken ony wight, I dare wele seyne.
 How may this be, yt deth and lyf both tueyne?
 Sall bothe atonis, in a creature
 Togidder dwell, and turment thus nature?

L.

I may not ellis done, bot wepe and waile
 Within thir cald wallis thus *p* ylokin:

From

o Myn axis.] My fever.—*Axis* is still used by the country people in Scotland for the ague, or trembling fever.

p Ylokin.] Locked up within his prison-walls.

96 THE KING'S QUAIR.

From hensfurth my rest is my travaile ;
 My drye thirst with teris fall I flokin,
 And on my self bene all my harmys wrokin :
 Thus *q* bute is none ; bot Venus, of hir grace,
 Will schape remede, or do my spirit *r* pace.

LI.

As Tantalus I travaile, ay buteles
 That ever ylike hailith at the well
 Water to draw, w^t buket bottemless,
 And may not spede, quhois penance is ane hell ;
 So by myself this tale I may well telle,
 For unto hir y^t herith not I pleyne,
 Thus like to him my travaile is in veyne.

LII.

So fore thus fight I w^t myself alone,
 That turnyt is my strength in febilnesse,
 My wele in wo, my frendis all *s* in fone,
 My lyf in deth, my ly^t into dirkness,
 My hope in feere, in dout my sekirnesse ;
 Sen sche is gone, and God mote hir conuoye,
 That me may gyde fro turment and to joye.

LIII.

q *Bute is none.*] Help or remedy there is none.

r *Do my spirit pace.*] Bring peace to, or calm my spirits.

s *In fone.*] My friends turned my foes.

T H E

K I N G ' s Q U A I R .

C A N T O I I I .

The Poet is transported to the Sphere of Love.

I.

METHO^T yt thus all fodeynly a lyt,
In at the wyndow come quhare at I lent,
Of quhich the chambere wyndow fchone full bryt,
And all my body fo it hath ouerwent,
That of my ficht the vertew hale * I blent,
And that wt all a voce unto me said,
I bring the comfort and hele, be not affrayde.

II.

And furth anon it passit fodeynly,
Quhere it come in, the ryt way ageyne,
And

* *My ficht-hale I blent.*] Or *I blent*, dazaled with the
light.

98 THE KING'S QUAIR.

I laid, and lenit, amaifit verily!

Half-fleeping and half-fuoun, in fuch a wife,
And quhat I met I will zou now deuife.

“ *Ouerfet* fo with forrow——

“ That to the cold ftone my hede on wrye

“ I laid and leanit *amazed* verily!

“ Half fleeping and half in *fwoon*.”——

A modern sentimental poet would, with a great deal of metaphysical wit, have laboured, perhaps, through fifty lines, in describing the Prince's situation on this occasion.

THE

T H E

K I N G ' s Q U A I R .

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And that wt all a voce unto me said,
I bring the comfort and hele, be not affrayde.

II.

And furth anon it passit fodeynly,
Quhere it come in, the ryt way ageyne,
And

* *My ficht-hale I blent.*] Or *I blent*, dazzled with the
light.

100 THE KING'S QUAIR.

And fone methot furth at the dure in *y* hye
I went my weye, *z* was nathing me ageyne,
And haftily, by bothe the armes tueyne,
I was araifit up into the aire,
a Clippit in a cloude of cryftall clere and faire.

III.

Ascending vpward ay fro spere to spere,
Through aire and watere and the hote fyre,
Till *y*^t I come vnto the circle clere,
Off *b* signifere quhare fair bryt and *c* fchere,
The fignis fchone, and in the glad empire
Off blifsful Venus ane cryit now
So fudaynly, almost I wift not how.

IV.

Off quhich the place, quhen I com there nye,
Was all methot of chriftal ftonis wrot,

And

y *In hye.*] In hafte.

z *Was nathing me ageyne.*] Nothing oppofing me.

a *Clippit in a cloud.*] Embraced, furrounded, held faft.
From the A. Saxon *clyppan*.

b *Signifere.*] The Zodiac, or Circle of the twelve figns.

c *Bryt and fchire.*] Burning bright. G. D. p. 276. l. 43.

And to the port I listit was in hye,
 Quhare fodaynly, *d* as quho fais at a thot,
 It opnyt, and I was anon inbrot
 Wt in a chamber, large rowm and faire,
 And there I fand of *e* people grete repaire.

V.

This is to feyne, y^t present in that place,
 Methot I fawe of every nacion
 Loueris y^t endit thaire lyfis space
 In lovis service, mony a mylion
 Of quhois chancis maid is mencion
 In diverse bukis quho thame list to se,
 And therefore here thaire namys lat I be.

VI.

d e The phrases, "As who says at a thought," and "Of people great repair," I take to be both Scottish.

The following allegorical description of the Court of Venus, with the various groupes or classes of the votaries of Love, is extremely picturesque, and shows great powers of fancy and imagination. The poet, I apprehend, has had the celebrated *Tablature of Cebes* in his view, although his groupes of figures are different. The pictures progressively brought into view by our poet are distinct, and the figures well painted: The description is simple and pleasant, because not embarrassed with frequent interruption, as in *Cebes*, by the dialogue frequently breaking in. To a few readers, a short analysis or argument may perhaps not be unnecessary.

§ IV. and V. Description of the Palace of Love, and the poet's entry into it, where he sees groupes of people of every nation,

VI.

The quhois aventure and grete laboure
 Abone their hedis writen there I fand,
 This is to feyne martris, and confessoure,
 Ech in his stage, and his make in his hand ;
 And therew^t all thir peple fawe I stand,
 W^t mony a solempt contenance,
 After as lufe thame lykit to auance.

VII.

Off gude folkis y^t faire in lufe befell,
 There saw I fitt in order by thame *one*
 W^t *hedis bore*, and w^t thame stude *gude will*
 To talk and play, and after that anon
 Befyde thame, and next there saw I gone
Courage, among the fresche folkis zong,
 And w^t thame playit full merily, and song.

VIII.

nation, the devotees to love, whose stories are recorded in diverse books ;

§ VI. Each of whom has his make or mistress in his hand, and their story written above their heads.

§ VII. In the first class or groupe are those who were successful in love. *Prudence*, with his hoary head, accompanies them, and *Benevolence* and *Courage* join in chearful song with them.

VIII.

And in ane other stage, endlong the wall,
 There saw I stand in capis wyde and lang
 A full grete nowmer, but thaire hudis all
 Wist I not why, atoure thair eyen hang,
 And ay to thame come *Repentance* amang,
 And maid thame chere degyfit in his wede,
 And downward efter that zit I tuke hede,

IX.

Ryt ouer thwert the chamber was there drawe
 A trevesse thin and quhite, all of plesance,

The

§ VIII. False devotees to love, with caps or hoods over their eyes. These were hypocrites, who, under the cloak of religion, as is further explained in § XV. and XVI. privately carried on their amours. *Repentance* accompanies them.

The sanctimonious lecher is painted with great humour by a modern poet :

Full oft by holy feet our ground was trod,
 Of clerks great plenty here you mote espy ;
 A little round, fat, oily man of God,
 Was one I chiefly markt among the fry :
 He had a roguish twinkle in his eye,
 And shone all glistening with ungodly dew ;
 If a tight damsel chanc'd to trippen by,
 Which, when observ'd, he shrunk into his mew,
 And strait would recollect his piety anew.

Castle of Indolence.

The quhich behynd standing there, I sawe
 A warld of folk, and by thaire contenance
 Thair hertis femyt full of displefance,
 W^t billis in thaire handis of one assent,
 Vnto the judge thaire playntis to present.

X.

And there w^tall apperit vnto me
 A voce, and said, Tak hede, man, and behold:
 Zonder there thou seis the hieft stage and gree
 Of agit folk, w^t hedis hore and olde;
 Zone were the folk y^t never change wold
 In lufe, but trewly servit him alway,
 In every age, vnto thaire ending day.

XI.

For fro the time y^t thai coud vnderstand
 The exercife of lufis craft, the cure
 Was non on lyve y^t toke so much on hand
 For lufis sake, nor langer did endure

In

§ IX. A groupe of unsuccessful lovers with mournful countenances, holding in their hands their ditties or complaints.—*Traveffe* is a partition. Here it is a splendid transparent curtain.

§ X. The highest rank of lovers;—those who, through the whole of their lives, were invariable and constant in their loves, and hazarded all in its service.

In lufis fervice; for, man, I the affure,
 Quhen thay of zouth reffavit had the fill,
 Zit in thaire age thame lakkit no gude will.

XII.

Here bene alfo of fuich as in counfailis,
 And all thare dedis were to Venus trewe,
 Here bene the Princis faucht the grete bataillis,
 In mynd of quhom ar maid the bukis newe;
 Here bene the poetis y^t the sciencis knewe,
 Throwout the world, of lufe in thair fuete layes,
 Such as Ovide and Omere in thair dayes.

O

XIII.

§ XI. And while in youth they had full enjoyment, in age the paffion of love did not forfake them: Or, as our poet well expreffes it, “ In age they lakit no gude will.”

St Evremont, that lively old Norman, at the age of 70, writes to his favourite Madame Mazarine, “ That love is “ the laft paffion that leaves the human breaft !”—Dryden, in his Prologue to *Cymon and Iphigenia*, when paft the above age, gives a moft elegant turn to the fame thought :

“ Old as I am, for ladies love unfit,
 “ The power of beauty I remember yet,
 “ Which once inflam’d my foul, and ftill inspires my wit!”

§ XII. In this group were thofe heroes who had fought mighty battles, as recorded in hiftory; who were likewise devotees to love and gallantry; and in their fuite were thofe great poets who had recorded their deeds in their immortal lays, as Homer, Ovid, &c

XIII.

And efter thame down in the next stage,
 There, as thou feis, the zong folkis pleye :
 Lo! these were thay that, in thaire myddill age,
 Servandis were to lufe in mony weye,
 And diversely happenit for to deye,
 Sum sorrowfully for wanting of thaire makis,
 And sum in armes for thaire ladyes fakis.

XIV.

And other eke by other diuerse chance,
 As happin folk all day, as ze may fe ;
 Sum for dispaire, wtout recoverance ;
 Sum for desyre, furmounting thaire degree ;
 Sum for dispite, and other inmytee ;
 Sum for vnkyndness, wtout a quhy ;
 Sum for to mock, and sum for jelousye.



XV.

And efter this, vpon zone stage down,
 Tho yt thou feis stand in capis wyde ;

Zone

§ XIII. Those of middle age, who were unfortunate in their loves ; “ who died sorrowfully,” as the poet expresses, “ for wanting their makis ;” or were slain in battle in their mistress’s cause.

Zone were quhilum folk of religion,
 That from the warld thaire governance did hide,
 And frely servit lufe on every fyde,
 In secrete wt thaire bodyis and thaire gudis,
 And lo! quhy so, thai hingen doun thaire hudis.

XVI.

For though yt thai were hardy at assay,
 And did him service quhilum prively,
 Zit to the warldis eye it femyt nay,
 So was thaire service half cowardly,
 And for thay first forsuke him opynly,
 And efter that thereof had repenting,
 Forschame thaire hudisoure thaire eyen they hyng.

XVII.

And feis thou now zone multitude on rawe,
 Standing behynd zone traveffe of delyte,
 Sum bene of thame yt haldin were full lawe,
 And take by frendis, nothing thay to wyte,
 In zouth from lufe, into the cloistere quite,
 And for that cause are cummyn recounsilite,
 On thame to pleyne yt so thame had begilit.

XVIII.

§ XV. and XVI. Those hypocrites already described under § VIII.

§ XVII. Those who in youth were by their friends frequented from love and the world, and forced by them into cloisters.

XVIII.

And othir bene amongis thame also,
 That cummyn are to court on lufe to pleyne,
 For he thair bodyes had bestouit so,
 Quhare bothe thaire hertes gruch there ageyne,
 For quhich in all thaire dayes soth to feyne,
 Quhen other lyvit in joye and plesance,
 Thaire lyf was no^t bot care and repentance.

XIX.

And quhare thaire hertis gevin were and fet,
 Were copilt wt other y^t could not accord;
 Thus were thair wranged y^t did no forfet,
 Departing thame y^t never wold discord,
 Off zong ladies faire, and mony lord,
 That thus by maistry were fro thaire chose dryve,
 Full ready were thaire playntis there to gyve.

XX.

And other also I fawe compleynyng there
 Vpon fortune and hir grete variance,

That

§ XVIII. and XIX. Other complainants on love, who had bestowed their bodies, when their hearts were otherwise disposed of; for which they passed their lives in sorrow and repentance.

That quhere in love so well they coplit were
 Wt thair fueete makis coplit in plesance,
 So fodeynly maid thair disseverance,
 And tuke thame of this warldis companye,
 Wtoutin caufe there was non other quhy:

XXI.

And in a chiere of estate befyde,
 Wt *wingis bright, all plumyt*, bot his face,
 There sawe I sitt the blynd god *Cupide*,
 Wt bow in hand yt bent full redy was,
 And by him hang thre arowis in a cafe,
 Off quhich the hedis grundyn were full ryt,
 Off diverse metalis forgit fair and bryt.

XXII.

§ XX. Lovers who, being happily joined in love, were suddenly dissevered or parted by death.

§ XXI. The descriptive figure of Cupid is most beautifully painted, sitting near to the chair of state, which, in the Court of Love, belonged to his mother Venus,

“ With wingis bright all plumed but his face.”

This idea of painting Cupid, all covered with bright or resplendent wingis, is finely improved by Milton, in his description of the angel Raphael. Though it is not very probable that Milton ever saw this poem, it is curious, however, to observe how two poets, in distant ages, in raising their imagination to paint in the richest colours a celestial
 being

XXII.

And wt the first yt hedit is of gold,
 He smytis soft, and that has esy cure ;
 The secund was of silver, mony fold,
 Wers than the first, and harder aventure ;
 The third of stele is schot wtout recure ;
 And on his long zallow / lokkis schene,
 A chaplet had he all of levis grene.

XXIII.

being of youth and beauty, have hit upon the very same idea, of covering him with gorgeous wings.

“ ————— Six wings he wore, to shade
 “ His lineaments divine ; the pair that clad
 “ Each shoulder broad, came mantling on his breast
 “ With regal ornament : The middle pair
 “ Girt like a starry zone his waist ; and round
 “ Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold,
 “ And colours dipt in heaven : The third, his feet
 “ Shadowed from either heel with feather'd mail,
 “ Sky-tinctur'd grain ! Like Maia's son he stood,
 “ And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance fill'd
 “ The circuit wide.” —

PAR. LOST, lib. 5.

§ XXII. *f.* *And on his long zallow lokkis schene.*] Bright yellow locks. In our old writings, the form of the letter *y* resembles the modern form of the letter *z*. That, however, ought to be no good reason at this day for adhering to the old form in writing a *z* instead of *y*, as we do in some proper names,

XXIII.

And in a retrete lytill of compas,
 Depeyntit all wt fighis wonder fad,
 Not fuich fighis as hertis doith *g* manace,
 Bot fuich as dooth lufaris to be glad,
 Fond I *Venus* vpon hir bed, y^t had
 A mantill cast ouer hir schuldris quhite :
 Thus clothit was the goddesse of delyte.

XXIV.

Stude at the dure *Fair calling* hir vschere,
 That coude his office doon in conyng wife,
 And *Secretee* hir thrifty chamberere,
 That besy was in tyme to do seruife,
 And othir moyt I cannot on avife ;
 And on hir hede of rede rofis full fueete,
 A chapellet sche had, faire, fresch, and mete.

XXV.

names, as there can be no doubt that our ancestors pronounced the words *zallow, zouth, zit*, as we now do *yellow, youth, yet*. Throughout this poem I have kept invariably by the old orthography.

g Not such fighis as hertis doth manace.] That is, "as doth "alarm or make the heart sad;" but the amorous fighs of happy lovers.

XXV.

W^t quaking hert aſtonate of that fight,
b Unethis wiſt I, quhat y^t I fuld feyne,
 Bot at the laſt febily as I my^t,
 W^t my handis on bothe my kneis tueyne,
 There I begouth my caris to compleyne,
 W^t ane humble and lamentable *i* chere
 Thus ſalute I that goddeſs bry^t and clere.

XXVI.

Hye Quene of Luſe! ſterre of benevolence!
 Pitouſe princeſſe, and planet merciab!e!
 Appefare of malice and violence!
 By vertew pure of zour aſpectis hable,
 Vnto zour grace lat now bene acceptable
 My pure requelt, y^t can no forthir gone
 To ſeken help, bot vnto zow allone!

XXVII.

As ze y^t bene the focoure and ſuete *k* well
 Off remedye, of carefull hertes cure,

And

b *Unethis wiſt I.*] Not eaſily, or ſcarce knowing what to ſay.—G. D. p. 74. v. 24.

i *Lamentable chere.*] Or countenance.

k *Socoure and ſuete well.*] Sweet medicinal well, the cure of love-ſick hearts.

And in the / huge weltering wavis fell
 Off lufis rage, blifsfull havin, and fure,
 O anker and treue, of oure gude aventure,
 Ze have zour man wt his gude will conquest,
 Merci, therefore, and bring his hert to rest !

XXVIII.

Ze know the caufe of all my peynes fmert
 " Bet than myself, and all myn aventure
 Ze may conueye, and, as zow list, conuert
 The hardest hert yt formyt hath nature,
 Sen in zour handis all hale lyith my cure,
 Have pitee now, O bryt blifsfull goddeffe,
 " Off zour pure man, and rew on his distresse !

XXIX.

And though I was vnto zour lawis strange,
 By ignorance, and not by felonye,
 And yt zour grace now likit hath to change
 My hert, to serven zou perpetualye,
 P Forgive

/ " Blifsful haven, from the huge rolling waves of
 " Love's fell rage ;" and " true anchor." The metaphors
 here are poetical and well-chosen.

m Bet.] For better.

n Pity your pure man !] The common Scottissh phraife for
 " Pity the poor beggar !"

114 THE KING'S QUAIR.

Forgiue all this, and schapith remedye,
 To fauen me of zour benigne grace,
 Or do me ^o steruen furthw^t in this place.

XXX.

And w^t the stremes of zour Percyng lyt,
 Conuoy my hert, y^t is so wo-begone,
 Ageyne vnto that fueete hevinly fight,
 That I, within thir wallis cald as stonē
 So suetly saw on morow walk, and gone,
 Law in the gardyn ry^t tofore mine eye,
 Now, merci, Quene! and dō me not to deye,

XXXI.

Thir wordis faid, my spirit in dispaire
 A quhile I stynt, abiding efter grace,
 And therew^t all hir cristall eyen faire
 She kest afyde, and efter that a space,
 Benignely sche turnyt has hir face
 Towardis me full plesantly conueide,
 And vnto me ry^t in this uife sche feide:

XXXII.

o Or do me steruen furthwith.] Or kill me instantly.—Ster-
*uen from the Anglo-Saxon *steorfan*, to kill.—G. D. p. 391.*
 36.

XXXII.

Zong man, the cause of all thyne inward forowe
 Is not vnkawin to my deite,
 And thy request bothe nowe and eke to forowe,
 Quhen thou first maid profession to me,
 Sen of my grace I have inspirit the
 To knawe my lawe, contynew furth, for oft,
 There as I mynt full fore, I fmyte bot soft.

XXXIII.

Paciently thou tak thyne auenture,
 This *p* will my son Cupide, and so will I,
q He can the stroke, to me langis the cure
 Quhen I se tyme, and therefore truly
 Abyde, and serue, and lat gude hope the *r* gye,
 Bot for I have thy forehede here pent,
 I will the schewe the more of myn entent.

XXXIV.

r This is to fay, though it to me pertene
 In lufis lawe the sepre to governe,

That

p *This will.*] This is the will of my son Cupid.

q *He can.*] Cupid gives the wound; to me belongs the cure.

r *Gye.*] Guide.

r *This is to fay.*] Although it pertains to me to govern in love's law, yet the effects of the bright beams, and aspects of
 of

That the effectis of my bemes schene
 Has thair aspectis by ordynance eterne,
 W^t otheris bynd and mynes to discerne,
 Quhilum in thingis bothe to cum and gone,
 That langis not to me to writh, God allone.

XXXV.

t As in thyne awin case now may thou se,
 For quhy, lo y^t otheris influence,
 Thy persone standis not in libertce ;
 Quharfore, though I geve the benevolence,
 It standis not zit in myn advertence,
 Till certeyne course endit be and ronne,
 Quhill of trew feruis thou have hir ^u I-wonne.

XXXVI.

And zit, confidering the nakitnesse
 Bothe of thy wit, thy persone, and thy myt,

It

of my planet, are directed by the eternal ordinance, which binds all things ; and although I can discern things to come, yet I have no power, by myself, to wrest or turn aside what is decreed : God alone is able to do that.

t As, in thy own case, you being at present under other influence, thy person is not at liberty ; therefore, although you have my good will, yet I can do no more, until you have run your course in the faithful service of your mistress.

^u *I-won, or T-won.*] Gained or conquered.

It is no match, of thyne vnworthinesse
 To hir hie birth, estate, and beautee bryt,
 Als like ze bene, as day is to the nyt,
 Or fek-cloth is unto fyne * cremefye,
 Or doken to the fresche dayefye.

XXXVII.

Vnlike the y mone is to the sonne schene,
 Eke Januarye is like vnto May,
 Vnlike the cuckow to the phylomene;
 z Thaire tavartis are not bothe maid of aray,
 Vnlike

* *Cremefye.*] Crimfon-cloth.

y Unlike the moon is to the bright sun.

z *Thaire tavartis are not bothe maid of aray.*] The meaning of this phrase, which appears to be proverbial, may be conjectured. *Tavert, tabard, or taberd,* was a short coat open before, and without sleeves, and worn only in the time of service in war; hence it was called the *tavart of aray*. It distinguished the rank of the knight, or person who wore it, by the armorial-bearing painted on it, as the herald's coat at this day doth. Hence we still keep the phrase of *coat-armorial, or coat of arms*. Our poet uses it in this sense. The *tavart of aray* of the cuckow and nightingale are very different; or, to use another proverb, "They are not fowls of the same feather." In Urry's *Life of Chaucer*, there is a curious dispute as to a knight's assuming the coat of aray of another knight:

"The

Vnlike the crow is to the papejay,
 Vnlike, in goldfmythis werk, a fischis eye
 a To purcrefs wt perll, or maked be so heye.

XXXVIII.

As I have said, vnto me belangith
 Specially the cure of thy sekneffe,
 Bot now thy matere so in balance hangith,
 That it requireth, to thy sekerneffe,
 The help of other mo than one goddesse,
 And have in thame the menes and the lore,
 In this mater to schorten wt thy fore.

XXXIX.

And for thou fall fe wele yt I entend,
 Vnto thy help thy weelfare to preferue,
 The streight weye thy spirit will I fend
 To the goddesse yt clepit is *Mynerve*,

And

“ The *tabard* was the well-known sign of ane hostillrie in
 “ Southwark, in which (says Speght) was the lodging of
 “ the Abbot of Hyde, by Winchester, where Chaucer and
 “ the other pilgrims met together, and with Henry Baillie,
 “ their merry host, accorded about the manner of their
 “ journey to Canterbury.”

SPEGHT'S *Glossary to Chaucer*.

a *To purcrefs wt perll.*] The meaning is explained by what
 follows: “ A fish-eye, compared with a pearl.”—The word
 itself, or its etymology, I don't find in any glossary.

And fe y^t thou hir *b* heftis well conserue,
 For in this cafe fche may be thy fupplie,
 And put thy hert in reft als well as I.

XL.

Bot for the way is vncouth vnto the,
 There as hir dwelling is, and hir fojurne,
 I will y^t *gud hope* feruand to the be,
 Zoure *c* alleris frende, to *d* let the to murn,
 Be thy condyt and gyde till thou returne,
 And hir befech, y^t fche will in thy nede
 Hir counfelle geve to thy welefare and fpede.

XLI.

And y^t fche will, as *e* langith hir office,
 Be thy gude lady, help and counfeiloure,

And

b Her heftis.] Her behests, commands, or directions.

c Zour alleris frende.] Your ally, associate, or confederate.

d To let the to murn.] To hinder or prevent thee from mourning.

e As langith.] As belongeth to her office.—The reader must have observed, that, throughout the whole of this poem, our poet uses many words according to the Scottish orthography and pronunciation, particularly in the use of the letter *a*, in place of *o*. Ex. gr. *World, amang, belang, sang, wald, bald, Saul, knowe, blaw, &c.*

Vnlike the crow is to the papejay,
 Vnlike, in goldfmythis werk, a fischtis eye
 * To purcrefs wt perll, or maked be so heye.

XXXVIII.

As I have said, vnto me belangith
 Specially the cure of thy sekneffe,
 Bot now thy matere fo in balance hangith,
 That it requireth, to thy sekerneffe,
 The help of other mo than one goddesse,
 And have in thame the menes and the lore,
 In this mater to schorten wt thy fore.

XXXIX.

And for thou fall fe wele yt I entend,
 Vnto thy help thy weelfare to preferue,
 The streight weye thy spirit will I fend
 To the goddesse yt clepit is *Mynerue*,

And

“ The *tabard* was the well-known sign of ane hostillrie in
 “ Southwark, in which (says Speght) was the lodging of
 “ the Abbot of Hyde, by Winchester, where Chaucer and
 “ the other pilgrims met together, and with Henry Baillie,
 “ their merry host, accorded about the manner of their
 “ journey to Canterbury.”

SPUGHT'S *Glossary to Chaucer*.

[*a To purcrefs wt perll.*] The meaning is explained by what
 follows: “ A fish-eye, compared with a pearl.”—The word
 itself, or its etymology, I don't find in any glossary.

And fe y^t thou hir *b* heftis well conferve,
 For in this cafe fche may be thy fupplye,
 And put thy hert in reft als well as I.

XL.

Bot for the way is vncouth vnto the,
 There as hir dwelling is, and hir fojurne,
 I will y^t *gud hope* feruand to the be,
 Zoure *c* alleris frende, to *d* let the to murn,
 Be thy condyt and gyde till thou returne,
 And hir befech, y^t fche will in thy nede
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120 THE KING'S QUAIR.

And to the schewe hir rype and gude auife,
 Throw quich thou may be proceffe and labour,
 Atteyne vnto that glad and goldyn floure,
 That thou wald have so fayn w^tall thy hart,
 And forthirmore fen thou hir servand art.

XLII.

Quhen thou descendis doun to ground ageyne,
 Say to the men, y^t there bene resident,
 How long think thay to stand in my difdeyne,
 That in my lawis bene so negligent,
 From day to day, and list thame not repent,
 Bot breken louse and walken at thaire large,
 Is none y^t thereof gevis charge.

XLIII.

And for, q^d fche, the angir and the smert
 Of thair vnkyndeneffe dooth me constreyne
 My femynyne and wofull tender hert,
 That than I wepe, and to a token pleyne,
 As of *f* my teris cummyth all this reyne,
 That ze fe on the ground so fast *g* yvete,
 Fro day to day, my turment is so grete.

XLIV.

f *My teris cummyth all this reyne.*] This shower of tears
 which I shed.

g *Yvete* or *y-wet* with my tears.

XLIV.

And quhen I wepe, and stynten othir quhile
 For pacience y^t is in womanhede,
 Than all my wrath and rancoure I exile,
 And of my cristall teris y^t bene shede,
 The hony flouris growen vp and sprede,
 That preyen me in thaire flouris wife,
 Be trewe of lufe, and worship my seruice:

XLV.

And eke, in taken of this pitoufe tale,
 Quhen so my teris dropen on the ground,
 In thaire nature the lytill birdis smale
 Styntith thair song, and murnyth for that stound,
 And all the lightis in the hevin round
 Off my greuance have such compaciencie,
 That from the ground they hiden thaire presence.

XLVI.

And zit in tokenyng forthir of this thing,
 Quhen flouris springis and freschefts bene of hewe,
 And y^t the birdis on the twiftis sing,
 At thilke tyme ay ^b gynen folk to renewe,

Q

That

b At thilk tyme gynen folk to renewe.] In the spring, when
 flowers put forth and birds sing on the trees, and gyn or be-
 gin to pair, and renew or increase their kind.

The

Vnlike the crow is to the papejay,
 Vnlike, in goldfmythis werk, a fischtis eye
 a To purcrefs wt perll, or maked be so heye.

XXXVIII.

As I have faid, vnto me belangith
 Specially the cure of thy feknesse,
 Bot now thy matere fo in balance hangith,
 That it requireth, to thy fekernesse,
 The help of other mo than one goddesse,
 And have in thame the menes and the lore,
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Bot for the way is vncouth vnto the,
 There as hir dwelling is, and hir fojurne,
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 Zoure *c* alleris frende, to *d* let the to murn,
 Be thy condyt and gyde till thou returne,
 And hir befech, y^t fche will in thy nede
 Hir counfelle geve to thy weelfare and fpede.

XLI.

And y^t fche will, as *e* langith hir office,
 Be thy gude lady, help and counfeiloure,
 And

b Her heftis.] Her behefts, commands, or direftions.

c Zour alleris frende.] Your ally, affociate, or confederate.

d To let the to murn.] To hinder or prevent thee from mourning.

e As langith.] As belongeth to her office.—The reader muft have obferved, that, throughout the whole of this poem, our poet ufes many words according to the Scottifh orthography and pronunciation, particularly in the ufe of the letter *a*, in place of *o*. Ex. gr. *World, amang, belang, fang, wald, bald, Saul, knawe, blaue, &c.*

124 THE KING'S QUAIR.

That am zour hevin and zour paradise,
And I zour confort here fall multiplie,
And, for zoure meryt here perpetuallye,
Reffraue I fall zour faulis of my grace,
To lyve wt me as goddis in this place.

THE

T H E

K I N G ' s Q U A I R ,

C A N T O I V .

He is conducted to the Palace of Minerva.

I.

W^T Humble thank, and all the reverence
That feble wit and conyng may atteyne,
I take my leve; and from hir presence
Gude Hope and I togider both tueyne
Departit are, and shortly for to feyne
He hath me led redy wayis ryt
Vnto *Minerve's Palace*, faire and bryt.

II.

Quhare as I fand, full redy at the zate,
The *maister portare*, callit *Pacience*,
That frely lete vs in, vnquestionate,
And there we sawe the perfyt excellence,

The

126 THE KING'S QUAIR.

k The said renewe, the state, the reuerence,
 The strenth, the beautee, and the ordour digne,
 Off hir court-riall, noble and benigne.

III.

And straught vnto the presence sodeynly
 Off dame Minerue, the pacient goddesse,
 Gude Hope my gyde led me redily,
 To quhom anon, wt dredefull humylnesse
 Off my cummyng, the cause I gan expresse,
 And all the proceffe hole, vnto the end,
 Off Venus charge, as likit her to fend.

IV.

Off quhich ryt thus hir anfuere was in bref:
 My son, I have wele herd, and vnderstond,
 Be thy reherse, the mater of thy gref,
 And thy request to procure, and to ^l fond
 Off thy penance sum confort at my hond,
 Be counsele of thy lady Venus clere,
 To be with hir thyne help in this matere.

V.

k *The said renewe.*] This must surely be an error in the copy, as it appears to be unintelligible.

l *To fond.*] To find of thy penance some comfort from

V.

Bot in this case thou fall well knawe and witt,
 Thou may thy hert ground on suich a wife,
 That thy labour will be bot lytill quit,
 And thou may fet it in otherwife,
 That wil be to the grete worfchip and prife ;
 And gif thou durst vnto that way enclyne,
 I will the geve my lore and discipline.

VI.

Lo, my gude son, this is als much to feyne,
 As gif thy lufe be fet *m* alluterly
 Of nyce lust, thy travail is in veyne,
 And so the end fall turne of thy folye,
 To payne and repentance, lo wate thou quhy ?
 Gif the ne list on lufe thy *vertew* set,
Vertu fall be the cause of thy forfet.

VII.

ⁿ Tak him before in all thy gouernance,
 That in his hand the stere has of zou all,

And

m *Set alluterly.*] If your heart is set altogether upon lust, and not upon virtuous love, thy travail is vain, and shall end in sorrow and repentance!

ⁿ *Tak him, &c.*] The explanation of the foregoing stanza.—In the first place, take Virtue for thy guide, who holds

128 THE KING'S QUAIR.

And pray vnto his hye purveyance,
Thy lufe to gye, and on him traift and call,
That corner-stone, and ground is of the wall,
That failis not, and trust, wtoutin drede,
Vnto thy purpose fone he fall the lede.

VIII.

For lo, the werk yt first is foundit fure,
May better bere apace and hyare be,
Than otherwise and langere fall endure,
Be mony fald, this may thy refon fee,
And stronger to defend aduersitee ;
Ground thy werk, therefore, upon the stone,
And thy desire fall forthward w^t the gone.

IX.

Be trewe, and meke, and stedfast in thy thot,
And diligent her merci to procure,
Not onely in thy word, for word is not,
Bot gif thy werk and all thy besy cure
Accord thereto, and o vtrid be mesure,

The

holds the helm that steers the vessel, and who will not fail you, but will conduct you to the completion of your wishes.

o Outrid be mesure.] Out-red, gone through, or regulated by measure and propriety, as to time and place.

The place, the houre, the maner, and the wife,
Gif mercy fall admitten thy servise.

X.

p All thing has tyme, thus fais *Ecclesiaste* ;
And wele is him y^t his tyme will abit :
Abyde thy tyme ; for he y^t can bot hafte
Can not of hap, the wife man it writ ;
And oft gud fortune flourith w^t gude wit :
Quharefore, gif thou will be well fortunyt,
Lat wisedom ay to thy will be junyt.

XI.

Bot there be mony of fo brukill fort,
That feynis treuth in lufe for a quhile,
And setten all thaire wittis and difport,
The fely innocent woman to begyle ;
And fo to wynne thaire luftis w^t a wile ;
Suich feynit treuth is all bot trechorye,
Vnder the ? vmbre of ypocrifye.

R

XII.

p *All thing has tyme, thus fais Ecclesiaste.*] “ To every
“ thing there is a feason, and a time to every purpose under
“ the heaven ; a time to get and a time to lose,” &c.

ECCLES. cap. 3.

q *Under the umbre.*] Under the shade of hypocrisy,

XII.

For as the foulere quhistlith in his throte,
 Diuerfely to counterfete the brid,
 And feynis mony a fuede and strange nete,
 That in the busk for his defate is hid,
 Till sche be fast lok in his net amyd,
 Ry^t fo the ^r fatoure, the false theif, I fay,
 W^t fuede treason oft wynith thus his pray.

XIII.

Fy on all such! fy on thaire doubilnesse!
 Fy on thaire lust, and bestly appetite!
 Thaire wolfis hertis, in lambis liknesse;
 Thaire thoughtis blak, hid vnder wordis quhite;
 Fy on thaire labour! fy on thaire delyte!
 That feynen outward all to hir honour,
 And in thair hert her worship wold deuour.

XIV.

So hard it is to trusten now on dayes
 The warld, it is so double and inconstant,
 Off quhich the suth is hid be mony assayes;
 More pitee is; for quhich the remanant

That

^r *The fatoure.*] The lustful person.

That menen well, and are not variant,
 For otheris gilt are suspect of vntreuth,
 And hyndrit oft, and treuely that is reuth.

XV.

Bot, gif the hert be groundit ferm and stable
 In Goddis law, thy purpose to atteyne,
 Thy labour is to me agreable,
 And my full help wt counsele trew and pleyne,
 I will the schewe, and this is the certeyne ;
 Opyn thy hert, therefore, and lat me see
 Gif thy remede be pertynent to me.

XVI.

Madame, q^d I, sen it is your plesance
 That I declare the kynd of my loving,
 Treuely and gude, wtoutin variance,
I lufe that flour abufe all other thing,
 And wold, bene he, yt to hir worschipping
 Myt ought availe, be *him* s^t *starf on rude*,
 And nowthir spare for trauaile, lyf, not gude.

XVII.

s Be him that starf on rude.] That died on the crofs.—I
 would spare neither travel, life, or estate, if I thought I
 could avajl or succeed.

XVII.

And, forthirmore, as touching the nature
 Off my lufing, to worfchip or to blame,
 I darre wele fay, and therein me affure,
 For ony gold y^t ony wight can name,
 Wald I be he y^t fuld of hir gude fame
 Be blamischere in ony point or wyfe,
 For wele nor wo, quhill my lyf may fuffife.

XVIII.

This is the effect trewly of myn entent,
 Touching the fuede y^t fmertis me fo fore,
 Giff this be faynt, I can it not repent,
 Although my lyf fuld forfaut be therefore :
 Blisfull princeffe ! I can feye zou no more,
 Bot fo defire, my wittis dooth compace
 More joy in erth, kepe I not bot zour grace.

XIX.

Defire, q^d fche, I nyl it not deny,
 So thou it ground and fet in criffin wife ;
 And therefore, fon, opyn thy hert playnly.
 Madame, q^d I, trew w^toutin fantife,
 That day fall I neuer vp rife,
 For my delyte to couate the plesance
 That may hir worfchip putten in balance.

XX.

XX.

For our ^t all thing, lo this were my gladnesse,
 To sene the fresche beautee of hir face ;
 And gif it my^t deserue ^u be proceffe,
 For my grete lufe and treuth to stond in grace,
 Hir worschip fauf, lo here the blisfull cace
 That I wold ask, and thereto attend,
 For my most joye vnto my lyfis end.

XXI.

Now wele, q^d s^{ch}e, and sen y^t it is so,
 That in vertew thy lufe is set w^t treuth,
 To helpen the I will be one of tho
 From hensforth, and hertly without sleuth,
 Off thy distresse and excesse to have reuth,
 That has thy hert, I will pray full faire,
 That fortune be no more thereto contraire.

XXII.

For suth it is y^t all ze creatures,
 Quhich vnder vs beneth have zour dwellyng,
 Reffauen

t For our all thing.] For over or above all things.

u Be proceffe.] If, in processe of time, I might stand in
 her grace, as a reward of my love and truth.

134 THE KING'S QUAIR.

Reffauen diuerfely * zour auenturis,
 Off quhich the cure and principal melling
 Apperit is wtoutin repellyng,
 Onely to h̄ir y^t has the cuttis two
 In hand, both of zour wele and of your wo.

XXIII.

And how fo be, y^t fum clerkis t̄ete,
 y That zour chance caufit is tofore,
 Heigh in the hevin, by quhois effectis grete,
 Ze movit are to wrething lefs or more,
 Quhare in the world, thus calling y^t therefore,
 Fortune, and fo y^t the diuerfitee
 Off thaire werking fuld cause neceffitee.

XXIV.

z Bot other clerkis halden that the man,
 Has in himfelf the chofe and libertee

To

* *Zour aenturis.*] Your fortune or destiny, the controuling of which is beyond your power, and belongs only to the Fates.

y *That all zour chance caufit is tofore.*] Your life and fortune is preordained in heaven, by whose direction ye are moved to wreth, *i. e.* to wreth or move lefs or more in the affairs of the world: Thus what is called *fortune*, through the variety of her operations, is truly *necessity*.

z But other clerks hold the opposite doctrine of liberty in man's actions, and that he is under no necessity, but acts from choice, and according to his own purpose or will.

To cause his awin fortune, how, or quhat,
 That him best left, and no necessitee
 Was in the hevin at his nativitee ;
 Bot zit the thingis happin in qmune,
 Efter purpose, so cleping thame fortune.

XXV.

a And quhare a persone has tofore knowing
 Off it y^t is to fall purpofely,
 Lo fortune is bot wayke in such a thing,
 Thou may wele wit, and here ensample quhy,
 To *God* it is the first cause onely
 Off euery thing, there may no fortune fall,
 And quhy ? for *he* foreknawin is of all.

XXVI.

b And therefore thus I say to this sentence,
 Fortune is most and strangest euermore,
 Quhare,

a Where one knows before hand what purpofely is to fall out, in that case chance or fortune is weak, or has little to do in the matter, as you may well know. Thus God, who is the first cause, and has foreknowledge of every thing, leaves nothing to be determined by chance.

b In human affairs, however, where man has no foreknowledge of what is to be the event, there fortune is ever strongest. " So, my son, since thou art but weak both in

Quhare, lest foreknawing or intelligence
 Is in the man, and *some* of wit or lore,
 Sen thou art wayke and feble, lo, therefore,
 The more thou art in dangere, and qmune .
 Wt hir, y^t clerkis clepen so *fortune*.

XXVII.

Bot for the sake, and at the reuerence
 Off Venus clere, as I the said tofore,

I

“ wit and *lore*, (or experience) thou art more subjected to
 “ what clerks *clepen* (or call) *fortune*.

From our poet's discussion of the question with regard to man's acting from his own *free-will*, or *from necessity*, he appears to have been sufficiently versant in the metaphysical learning of his age. Such intricate questions have been the *ignis fatuus*, or play of philosophers, in all ages down to the present.

Milton makes the subtle reasoning upon such abstruse points one of the entertainments of the fallen angels :

“ ———Others sat on a hill retir'd,
 “ And reason'd high——
 “ Of *providence*, *foreknowledge*, *will*, and *fate*,
 “ Fixt fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute,
 “ And found no end, in wandering mazes lost !
 “ ———Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy !”

Vain indeed ! while every man, in defiance to the futile arguments of metaphysicians, ought to be convinced, from his own feelings, that he is a *free agent*, and, as such, *accountable* for his actions.

I have of thy distresse compaciencie,
 And in confort and relefche of thy fore,
 The schewit here myn avise therefore,
 Pray fortune help; for fuich vnlikely thing
 Full oft about fche fodeynly dooth bring.

XXVIII.

Now go thy way, and haue gude mynd upon
 Quhat I have faid, in way of thy doctryne :
 I fall, Madame, q^d I, and ryt anon

c I tuke my leve, als ftraught as ony lyne

S

Within

c “ I tuke my leve, as ftraught as ony lyne
 “ Within a beme, that fro the contree divyne,
 “ She Percyng thro’ the firmament extendit,
 “ To ground ageyne my spirit is descendit.”

As Milton makes Uriel to descend to Paradise in the same manner, that is, on a sun-beam, this, with the similar instance noticed in our remark on Stanza XXI. of Canto III. would incline one to conjecture, that he had seen this poem of King James. Be that as it may, Milton has now made the thoughts his own, by the several fine allusions which he has added, and amplified with all the luxuriance of poetical fancy.

“ Thither came Uriel, gliding thro’ the even
 “ On a sun-beam, swift as a shooting star
 “ In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fir’d

“ Imprefs

138 THE KING'S QUAIR.

Within a beme, yt fro the contree dyvine,
Sche Percyng throw the firmament extendit,
To ground ageyne my spirit is descendit.

“ Imprefs the air, and flew the mariner
“ From what point of his compass to beware
“ Impetuous wind”——

THE

T H E

K I N G ' s Q U A I R .

C A N T O V .

His Journey in Quest of Fortune.

I.

Q U H A R E in a ^d lusty plane tūke I my way,
e Endlang a ryuer, plésand to behold,
Enbroudin all wt fresche flouris gay,
Quhare throu the grauel, bryt as ony gold,
The cristal water ran so clere and cold,
That in myn ere, maid contynualy,
A *f* maner foun mellit with armony.

II.

The scenery, or landskip, as in the three first stanzas of this Canto, is painted in the richest colours of poetry. The verse, too, is extremely harmonious.

d A lusty plane.] A pleasant delightful plain.

e Endlang a ryuer.] Along the side of a river.

f Maner foun.] A pleasant found, mixed with harmony.

II.

That full of lytill fischtis by the brym,
 Now here now there, w^t bakkis blew as lede,
 Lap and playit, and in a rout can swim
 So prattily, and dresfit thame to sprede
 Thaire curall fynis, as the ruby rede,
 That in the sonne on thaire scalis bryt,
^s As gesserant ay glitterit in my fight.

III.

And by this ilke ryuer fyde alawe
 Ane hyeway fand I like to bene,
 On quhich, on euery fyde, a long rawe
 Off trees saw I full of levis grene,
 That full of fruyte delitable were to sene;
 And also, as it come vnto my mynd,
 Of bestis sawe I mony diuerse kynd.

IV.

g As gesserant glitterit.] Like some precious stone, sparkled in my eye.

The epithets, expressive of some distinguishing quality of the several beasts mentioned by the poets, seem to be according to the natural history of these animals in that age, though now, as to some of them, known to be erroneous and exploded. Some of these epithets, I own, I am at a loss to explain.

IV.

The lyon king and his *b* fere lyoneffe,
 The pantere like vnto the *i* smaragdyne,
 The lytill squerell full of *k* besyneffe,
 The flawe affe, the *l* druggare beste of pyne,
 The *m* nyce ape, the *n* werely porpapyne,
 The Percyng lynx, the *o* lufare vnicorn,
 That voidis venym with his euoure horne.

V.

b Fere lyoneffe.] Fierce or wild.

i The pantere like unto the smaragdyne.] *Smaragdus* is generally understood to be the emerald, or a stone of green colour. How the spotted panther is likened to the emerald is not obvious; perhaps it meant only, that the panther's skin shone as bright as a precious stone.

k Full of besyneffe.] The squirrell always in motion.

l Slawe affe, druggare beste of pyne.] The meaning of the last two epithets can only be conjectured as applicable to the slow sluggish nature of the ass.

m Nyce ape.] Cunning ape.

n Werely, or warlike porcupine, armed with quills.

o Lufare unicorn.] This epithet of the unicorn, if such an animal is known to exist, and its quality of ejecting poison from its ivory horn, are now unknown.

V.

There fawe I *p* dresse him, new out of hant,
 The fere tigere full of felony,
 The dromydare, the *q* stander oliphant,
r The wyly fox, the wedouis inemye,
 The clymbare gayte, the *s* elk for ablastrye,
 The *t* herknere bore, the holfum grey for hortis,
 The *u* haire also, y^t oft gooth to the hortis.

VI.

p *Dresse him new out of hant.*] The fierce tyger, issuing from his haunt or den, new prepared for fallying out upon his prey.

q *The stander oliphant.*] The elephant, that always stands. According to the vulgar, the elephant was erroneously said to have no knees.

r *The wyly fox, the wedouis inemye.*] That robs the poor widow of her poultry.

s *The elk.*] A species of deer.—Buffon classes it with the rein-deer. What the meaning of the quality expressed by *ablastrye* is, I cannot find out. The colour of this animal is dark grey.

t u The epithets of the *herknere bore*, and *wholfum grey*, or *greyhound*, for *hortis*, or the gardens, the reader's own ingenuity must supply. The last, perhaps, means the hound that protects the garden from the hare that frequents it.

VI.

The *x* bugill draware by his hornis grete,
 The *y* martrik fable, the *z* foynzee, and mony mo,
a The chalk quhite ermyn, tippit as the jete,
 The riall hert, the conyng, and the ro,
 The wolf, *y*^t of the murthir not fay ho,
 The *b* lesty beuer, and the *c* ravin bare,
 For chamelot, the camel full of hare.

VII.

With many ane othir beste diverse and strange,
 That cummyth not as now vnto my mynd;
 Bot now to purpose straught furth the range,
 I held away oure hailing in my mynd,
 From quhens I come, and quhare *y*^t I fuld fynd
Fortune, the goddesse unto quhom in hye
Gude hope, my *gyde*, has led me fodeynly.

VIII.

And at the last behalding thus afyde,
 A round place wallit have I found,

In

x *The bugill draware by his hornis grete.*] The stag. Perhaps the buffalo, which is an animal that draws in the yoke.

y *Martrick fable.*] The fable martin.

z *The foynzee.*] The fawn. G. D. p. 220. 42.—In vulgar French *fouine* is the pole-cat.

a *The chalk-white ermyn, tipt with spots black as jet.*] The body of the ermyn is pure white. The tail only is tipt with black.


b *Lesty bever.*] If *lesty* means here *lusty*, or *lustifull*, this animal is not so. Perhaps it means, according to the Scottish, *lusty*, *plump*, or *fat*, which is applicable to the beaver.

c *Ravin*, or ravenous bear.

144 THE KING'S QUAIR.

In myddis quhare eftfone I have fpide
Fortune, the goddeffe, ^a hufing on the ground,
 And ryt befor hir fete, of compas round,
^c A *qubele*, on quhich clevering I fye
 A multitude of folk before myn eye.

IX.

And ane furcote fche werit long that tyde,
 That femyt to me of diuerfe hewis,
 Quhilum thus, quhen fche wald turn afyde,
 Stude this goddefs of fortune *f* ,
 A chapellet wt mony fresch ^g anewis
 Sçhe had upon hir hede, and wt this hong
 A mantill on hir schuldries large and long.


X.

That furrit was wt ermyn full quhite,
 Degontit wt the self in spottis blake,

And

^d The goddefs *Fortune* *busing*, *i. e.* dwelling or abiding on the ground. From the A. Saxon *hose*, a house. Hence our word *houff*, or *haunt*.

^e *A qubele on which clevering.*] A wheel, on which I saw a multitude clambering.

^f *Stude this goddefs of fortune,* ] The reader's own ingenuity must supply this mark of abbreviation. Perhaps it may be for *askew*, or *askewis*.

^g *A chaplet with fresch anewis*, or budding flowers.

And quhilum in hir chere thus alyte
 Louring fche was, and thus fone it wold flake,
 And fodeynly a *b* maner fmylyng make
 And fche were glad, at one contenance
 Sche held not, bot ay in variance. *

XI.

And vnderneath the quhele fawe I there
 An vgly pit, depe as ony helle,
 That to behald thereon I quoke for fere ;
 Bot a thing herd I, yt quho therein fell,
 Com no more vp agane tidingis to telle ;
 Off quhich, astonait of that ferefull fy^t,
 I ne wift quhat to done, fo was I fricht.

XII.

Bot for to fe the fudayn weltering
 Of that ilk quhele yt *i* floppare was to hold,
 It femyt vnto my wit a ftrong thing,
 So mony I fawe yt than clumben wold,
 And failit foting, and to ground were rold,
 And othir eke yt fat above on hye,
 Were overthrawe in twinklyng of ane eye.

T

XIII.

b *Maner.*] Pleafant.

* The various turns of fortune incident to mankind are pointed out with a great deal of fancy in the following ftanzas.

i *Sloppare.*] Slippery or flippery.

XIII.

And on the quhele was lytill void space,
k Wele nere oure straught fro lawe to hye,
 And they were ware y^t long fat in place,
 So toltter quhilum did sche it to wreye,
 There was bot clymbe and ry^t downward hye,
 And fum were eke y^t fallyng had fore,
 There for to clymbe, thair corage was no more.

XIV.

I fawe also, y^t quhere fum were slungin,
 Be quhirlyng of the quhele vnto the ground,
 Full sudaynly sche hath vp / ythrungin,
 And set theme on agane full fauf and found,
 And ever I fawe a new swarm abound,
 That to clymbe vpward upon the quhele,
 Instede of thame y^t my^t no langer rele.

XV.

And at the last, in presence of thame all
 That stude about, sche clepit me be name,
And

k Nere-oure-straught.] Was almost streight.

l Up ythrungin.] Thrown up.- From the A. Saxon *thryngan*, or *thryngan*, thrown. G. D. '87. 52.

And therew^t upon kneis gan I fall
 Full sodaynly ^m hailfing, abaisf for schame;
 And, smylyng thus, sche said to me in game,
 Quhat dois thou here? quho has the hider sent?
 Say on anon, and tell me thyne entent.

XVI.

I fe wele, by thy chere and contenance,
 There is sum thing yt lysis the on hert,
 It stant not w^t the as thou wald perchance.
 Madame, q^d I, for lufe is all the smert
 That euer I fele ⁿ endlang and ouerthwert;
 Help of zour grace me wofull wretched wight,
 Sen me to cure ze powere have and myt.

XVII.

Quhat help, q^d sche, wold thou yt I ordeyne,
 To bring the vnto thy hertis desire?
 Madame, q^d I, ^o bot yt zour grace dedyne,
 Of zour grete myt, my wittis to inspire,
 To win the *well*, yt flokin may the fyre

In

^m *Hailfing.*] Saluting, or hailing. From the A. Saxon
hail, or *hal*. G. D. p. 69. 23.

ⁿ *Endlang and ouerthwert.*] Through my whole frame,
 in length and breadth.

^o *Bot that your grace.*] Would your grace but deign.

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In quhich I birn: Ah, goddeffs fortunate!
 Help now my game y^t is in poynt to p^r mate.

XVIII.

Off mate q^d sche, a verray sely wretch
 I fe wele, by thy dedely coloure pale,
 Thou art to feble of thyself to streche
 Vpon my quhele, to clymbe or to hale,
 Wtoutin help, for thou has q fund in stale
 This mony day wtoutin werdis wele,
 And wantis now thy veray hertis hele.

XIX.

Wele maistow be a wretchit man callit,
 That wantis the confort y^t fuld thy hert glade,
 r And has all thing within thy hert stallit,
 That may thy zouth oppressen or defade ;
 Though

p *That is in point to mate.*] *Mate*, or *maist*, to be overcome; defeated. From the old Fr. *mat*, overcome. G. D. p. 417. 17.—Hence *chec mate* at chefs.

q *Fund in stale.*] Been long in ward, and sequestered from friends. G. D. 382. 37.

r *That has all thing in thy hert stallit.*] Kept all in your own mind, without the comfort of communication with your friends, which has depressed and faded your youth.



Though thy begynnyng hath bene retrograde,
 † Be froward oppofyt quhare till afpert,
 Now fall thai turn, and luke on the dert.

XX.

And therewt all vnto the quhele in hye
 Sche hath me led, and bad me lere to clymbe,
 Vpon the quhich I steppit fudaynly;
 Now hald thy grippis, q^d fche, for thy tyme,
 An houre and more it rynis ouer † prime
 To count the hole, the half is nere away;
 Spend wele, therefore, the remanant of the day.

XXI.

Enfample (q^d fche) tak of this tofore,
 † That fro my quhele be rollit as a ball,

For

‡ Take the oppofite part, fo shall thy misfortunes take a
 turn.

‡ *Anc hour ouer prime.*] In ancient times, the hours, according to the times of devotion, were divided into two parts. From fix in the morning till nine, was called the *spatium orationum primarum*, or the hour of prime. Thus Milton:

“ ———Praise him in thy sphere,
 “ While day arifes, that sweet hour of prime.”

Fertum

150 THE KING'S QUAIR.

For the nature of it is euermore

After ane hicht to vale, and geve a fall,

Thus quhen me likith vp or down to fall.

Farewele, q^d fche, and by the ere me toke

So earnestly, yt therew^t all I woke.

Fortune here concludes her advice, by telling the Prince, that his revolution on her wheel is one hour, of which one half is already run ; therefore to make good use of his time still to run.

END OF THE VISION.

THE

T H E

G ' s Q U A I R .

A N T O VI.

I.

SY " goste, ay flikering to and fro,
that never art in quiet nor in rest,
cum to that place y^t thou cam fro,
which is thy first and verry proper nest ;
ay to day so fore here artow drest,
with thy fiesche ay walking art in trouble,
and sleping eke of pyne, so has thou double.

II.

[*O busy goste.*] Busy, fluttering, restless spirit.—It may be conjectured, that the King might have had in his mind the dying address of the Emperor Adrian to his soul.

Animula vagula blandula, &c.

The anxious *Quae nunc abibis in loca?* so suitable in the mouth of the heathen philosopher, is finely turned by the answer of the enlightened moralist :

- “ Thou never art in quiet, nor in rest,
- “ Till thou cum to *that place that thou cam fro,*
- “ Which is thy *first* and very *proper nest.*”

The whole apostrophe is solemn and striking.

II.

* Couert myself all this mene I to loke,
 Thought y^t my spirit vexit was tofore,
 In y^e fuenyng, affone as ever I woke,
 By XX fold it was in trouble more,
 Be thinking me wt fighting hert and fore,
 That nane other thingis bot dremes had,
 Nor fekernes my spirit wt to glad.

III.

And therew^t fone I z drefsit me to ryse,
 Fulfild of thot, pyne, and aduerfitee,
 And to myself I said in this wise,
 Quhat lyf is this? quhare hath my spirit be?
 A! merci, Lord! quhat will ze do w^t me?
 Is this of my forethot impressiion?
 Or is it from the hevin a visiion?

IV.

And gif ze goddis of zoure ^a purviance
 Have schewit this for my reconforting,

In

* *Couert myself.*] Within myself; I mean to consider all this.

y *In fuenyng.*] Although my spirit was troubled in dream, yet as soon as I was awake, I was more in trouble by twenty fold in thinking that all was but a dream, and nothing certain to comfort me.

z *I drefsit me.*] I prepared myself to rise.

a *Purviance.*] Praescience

In relefche of my furioufe penance,
 I zow befeke full truely of this thing,
 That of zour grace I myt have more *b* takenyng,
 Gif it fal be, as in my flepe before
 Ze fchewit have : and forth w^toutin more,

V.

In hye vnto the wyndow gan I walk,
 Moving within my fpirit of this fight,
 Quhare fodeynly a *turture*, *qubite as calk*,
 So evinly vpon my hand gan ly^t,
 And vnto me fche turnyt hir, full ry^t,
 Off quham the chere in hir birdis affort
 Gave me in hert *c* kalendis of confort. *

U

VI.

b *More taking.*] A further token.

c *Kalends of confort.*] Beginning of comfort ; a dawn of hope.

* In place of detailing the steps by which he arrived at the poffeffion of his beautiful miftrefs, the Prince concludes his poem, by a piece of machinery which is claffical and poetical : The white dove, the bird of Venus, fuddenly alighting on his hand, bearing a ftalk of jillyflowers, on whose leaves, in golden letters, is announced

“ *The newis glad, that blifsfull bene and fure*

“ *Of his confort*——

“ *That in the hevyn decretit was the cure,*”

Is finely imaginèd ; and is one of many instances, throughout this poem, of a rich fancy and fine inventive genius of the Royal Poet. The numbers, too, are poetical and flowing.

156 THE KING'S QUAIR.

And euery wicht his awin suete or fore,
Has maist in mynde, I can say zou no more.

XI.

Eke quho may in this lyfe have more plesance,
Than cum to largesse from thraldom and peyne?
And by the mene of luffis ordinance,
That has so mony in his golden cheyne,
Quhich this to wyn his hertis fouereyne,
Quho suld me ^k wite to write tharof, lat se;
Now sufficiance is my felicitee.

XII.

Beseeching vnto fair Venus abuse,
For all my brethir yt bene in this place,
This is to feyne yat seruandis ar to lufe,
And of his lady can no thank purchase,
His pane relefch, and sone to stand in grace,
Both to his worship and to his first ese,
So that it hir and refoun not displease.

XIII.

And eke for thame yat ar not entrit inne
The dance of lyfe, bot thither-wart on way,

In

^k *Who suld me wite, or blame?*

In gude tyme and fely to begynne.

For thame yt passit bene the mony affray,
 Thair prentiffhed, and forthirmore I pray
 In lufe, and cumyng ar to full plesance,
 To graunt thame all, lo gude perfeurance.

XIV.

And eke I pray for all the hertis dull,
 That lyven here in sleuth and ignorance,
 And has no curage at the rose to pull,
 Thair lyf to mend and thair faulis auance,
 With thair fuete lore, and bring thame to gude chance,
 And quho that will not for this prayer turn,
 Quhen thai wald faynest speid, yt yai may spurn.

XV.

! To rekyn of every thing the circumstance,
 As happint me quhen lefferen gan my fore,

Of

! To reckon or mention the particulars of his courtship, says the poet, would be tedious; but to conclude, this fair flower, (my mistress), says he, has afforded every remedy to my disease!—The high rapture which the King here expresses, on having attained the completion of his desires with his amiable princess, and their loves, which nothing, says he, but death can ever remove, was verified through the whole, though short period of their union, until the mournful catastrophe of his lamented death.

Of my rancoure and wofull chance,
 It war to long, I lat it be tharefore,
 And thus *this floure*, I can feye no more,
 So hertly has vnto my help actendit,
m That from the deth hir man fche has defendit.

XVI.

m *That from the deth hir man fche has defendit.*] To one that looks for pefages, this line will perhaps call his attention to a circumstance mentioned by the historians, of this virtuous and most affectionate princefs's receiving two wounds, in attempting to defend the King from his inhuman murderers!

“ Having firuck down the King, whom the Queen, by interpoſing her body, fought to ſave, being with difficulty pulled from him, ſhe received two wounds, and he with twenty-eight was left dead !”—HAWTHORNDEN.

It was ſaid by Æneas Sylvius, afterwards Pope Eugene IV. who was in Scotland as Legate, at the time, that he was at a loſs which moſt to applaud, the univerſal grief which overſpread the nation, on the death of the King, or the reſentment to which it was roused, and the juſt vengeance with which his inhuman murderers were purſued; who being all of them traced, and dragged from their lurking retreats, were, by the moſt lingering tortures that human invention could ſuggeſt, put to death. The Earl of Athole, whoſe ambition had incited him to conſpire the King's death, after ſuffering three days torture, crowned with a red-hot coronet of iron, with the inſcription “ KING OF TRAITORS !” was beheaded, and his quarters ſent to the chief cities of the kingdom.

XVI.

And eke the goddis mercifull virking,
 For my long pane, and trew service in lufe,
 That has me gevin halely myne asking,
 Quhich has my hert for ever fet abuse
 In perfyte joye, that never may remufe,
 Bot onely deth, of quhom in land and prise,
 With thankfull hert I fay richt in this wife.

XVII.

Bliffit mot be the goddis all,
 So fair that glateren in the firmament !
 And bliffit be thaire myt celestially,
 That have conuoyit hale with one assent,
 My lufe, and to glade a consequent !
 And thankit be fortunys exiltre,
 And quhele, that thus so wele has quhirlit me.

XVIII.

Thankit mot be, and fair and lufe befall
 The nyctingale, yat with so gud entent
 Sang thare of lufe, the notis fuede and small,
 Quhair my fair hertis lady was present,
 Hir with to glad, or that sche forthir went ;

And

And thou gerafloure, mot I thankit be
All other flouris for ye lufe of ye.

XIX.

And thankit be ye fair castell wall,
Quhare as I quhilom lukit furth and lent,
Thankit mot be the fanctis merciall,
That me first caufit hath this accident :
Thankit mot be the grene bewis bent,
Throu quhom and vnder first fortunyt me,
My hertis hele and my confort to be.

XX.

For to the prefence fueete and delitable,
Rycht of *this floure* yat full is of plesance,
By proceffe and by menys favourable,
First of ye blisful goddis purveyance,
And fyne throu long and trewe contynance
Of veray faith in lufe and trew fervice,
I cum am, and forthir in this wife.

XXI.

Vnworthy lo bot onely of hir grace,
In lufis rok, that esy is and fure,
In guerdoun of all my lufis space
Sche hath me tak, hir humble creature,

And



ere,
ere.

ye prefence,
thou wald be quite,
eloquens,
ay for thy remyt?
erci will admyt
that is thy gyd and stere,
thou piteoufely requere.

XXIV.

n the fatall influence,
hevyn quhare powar is comytt,

X

Of

and XXIII. The genuine natural simplicity of
itanzas, as they exprefs the modesty of the Royal
likewise enhance the merit of his poem.

does the fine concluding compliment, which he
baucer and Gower, his "*maisters dere.*"

162 THE KING'S QUAIR.

Of govirnance, by the magnificence
Of him that hieft in the hevin fitt.

* To quham we think that all oure hath writt,
Quho coutht it red agone fyne mony a zere,
Hich in the hevynis figure circulere.

XXV.

Vnto impnis of my maisteris dere,
Gowere and *Chaucere*, that on the steppis satt
Of rethorike, quhill thai were lyvand here,
Superlatiue as poetis laureate,
In moralitee and eloquence ornat, e,
I recommend my buk in lynis seven,
And eke thair faulis vnto the blisse of hevin.

A M E N !

EXPLICIT, zic. zic.

Quod Jacobus Primus Scotorum Rex Illustrissimus.

* These three lines are very obscure. To make out their sense, we must take in the whole stanza. " Thus (sayeth " the poet) endith my story, *causit* by the governance of " the Almighty, who reigns in heaven ; to whom we think " that all we have written was *couthit* or known in the heigh " heaven for ages before."—*Couth* signifies *known* ; from the A. Sax. *cuth*, *notus*. Hence *uncouth*, strange or unknown.

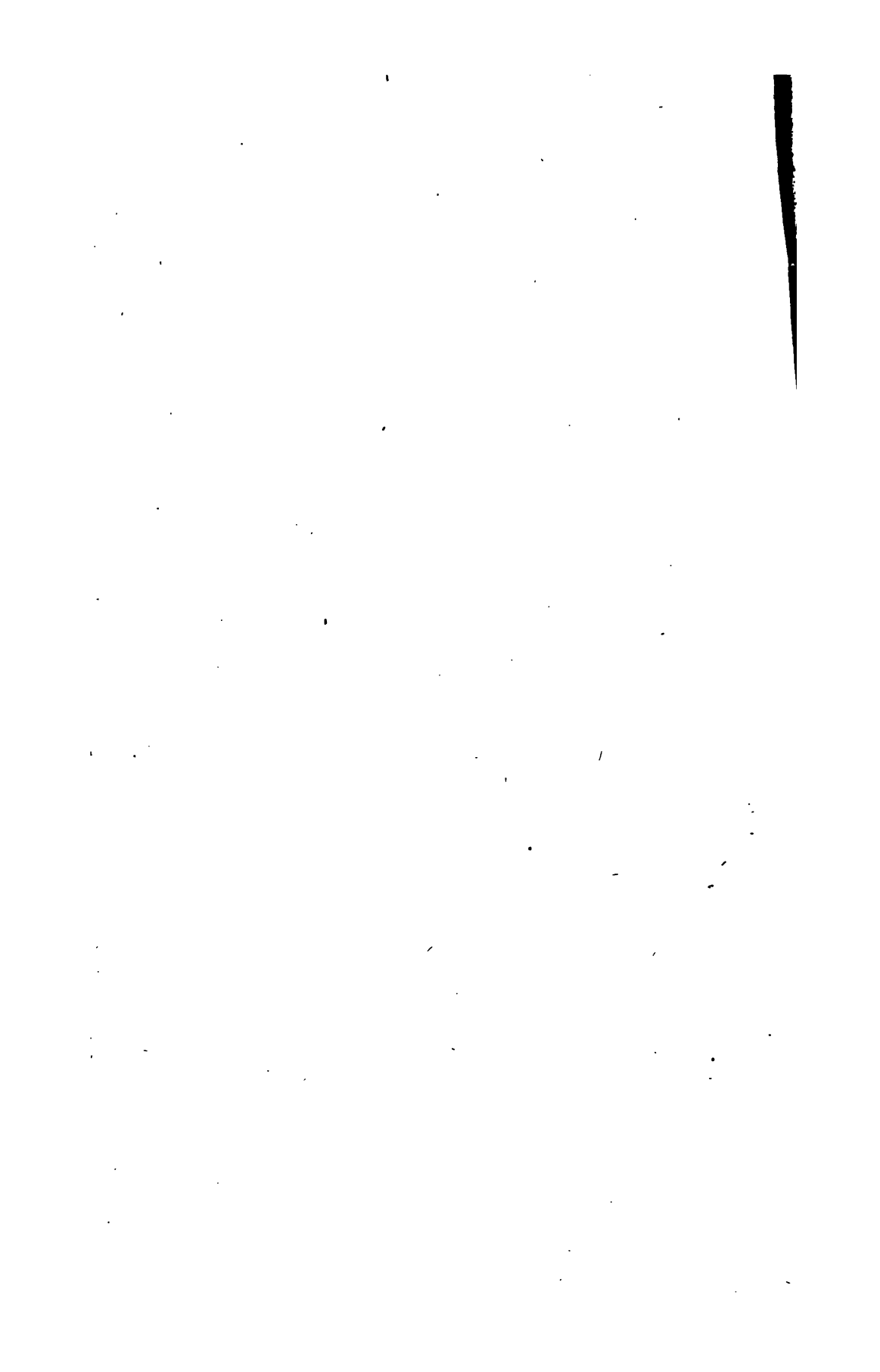


CHRISTIS KIRK OF THE GRENE.

B Y J A M E S I.

K I N G O F S C O T L A N D .





CHRISTIS KIRK OF THE GRENE.

I.

WES nevir in *Scotland* hard nor fene
Sic danfing nor *a* deray,

Nouthir

Christ's Kirk.] The scene of action of this poem is traditionally said to have been a village of *this name*, within, or near to the parish of *Lesly*, in that part of the county of Aberdeen called the *Garrioch*. In its neighbourhood is the hill of *Dunnideer*, which rises like a pyramid in the midst of the plain of *Garrioch*, on the top of which are the remains of a castle, said to have been a hunting-feat of the Scottish Kings.—Allan Ramsay seems to have mistaken the above situation for *Lesly* in the county of Fife.

a Deray.] Merriment, riot, disorder. G. D. p. 35. and 288. From the Fr. *deroyer*.—From the same derivation is the Scots word *royet*, or *royit*, signifying romping, daft, extravagant.

Nouthir at *b Falkland* on the Grene,
 Nor *c Pebillis* at the Play ;
 As wes of *d wowaris*, as I wene,
 At *Christis Kirk* on ane day :
 Thair came our *e kitties*, weshen clene,
 In thair new kirtillis of gray,
 Full gay,
 At *Christis Kirk* of the Grene that day.

II.

b Falkland.] One of the Royal houfes, fituated on the north side of the Lomond hills, in the county of Fife. The caſtle of Falkland, a noble edifice, was habitable in the beginning of the preſent century, though now in ruins.

c Pebillis, or Peebles.] The head town of the county of Tweeddale, fituated on the banks of the river Tweed. The annual games of archery, and other paſtimes, at Peebles, were of very ancient inſtitution. Our poet King James I. is ſaid to have often referred to that annual feſtivity.

d Wowaris.] Wooers, ſuitors.

e Kitties.] Ruſtic, romping, country laſſes, dreſt in their new apparel.—Biſhop Gibſon's edition has it,

“ For there came *Kitty*, waſhen clean

“ In her new gown of gray,” &c.

Which is ſubſtituting the proper name of one girl (*Kitty*, or *Kattie*) in place of the general epithet given to the whole country laſſes that were aſſembled on this occaſion.

II.

To dans thir damyfellis thame *f* dicht,
 Thir lasses *g* licht of laitiss,
 Thair *b* gluvis war of the *b* raffel rycht,
 Thair *i* shune wer of the *i* straitis,
 Thair *k* kirtillis wer of Lynkome licht,
 Weil prest with mony plaitis,
 They wer fa nyfs quhen men thame *l* nicht,
 Thay *m* squelit lyke ony *m* gaitis,
 Sa loud,
 At Christis Kirk of the Grene that day.

III.

f *Dicht.*] Dressed, or prepared for the occasion, G. D.
 p. 233. 395.

g *Licht of laitiss.*] This probably has been a vulgar phrase.
Licht of manners, lightsome, frolicsome, or romping.

b *Gluvis, gloves of the raffell rycht.*] Probably from the
 Saxon *ra*, or *rae*, a roe-deer; and *ffell*, a skin.

i *Shune wer of the straitis.*] Their shoes were made of Tur-
 key or Moroquin leather, from the Straits.

k *Kirtills of Lynkome licht.*] Gowns or petticoats of Lin-
 coln manufacture.

l *Men thame nicht.*] When men came nigh or toyed with
 them.

m *Squelit.*] Shrieked like wild goats.

III.

Of all thir madynis, myld as meid,
 Wes nane fa ⁿ jympt as *Gillie*,
 As ony rose hir ^o rude wes reid,
 Hir ^p lyre wes lyke the lillie :
 Fow zellow zellow wes hir heid,
 Bot scho of lufe wes ^q fillie ;
 Thot all hir kin had ^r sworn hir deid,
 Scho wald haif bot *fwelit Willie*
 Alane,
 At Christis Kirk, &c.

IV.

Scho skornit *fok*, and ^s skrapit at him,
 And ^t murgeonit him with morkkis,

He

ⁿ *fimp*.] Neat, tight, slender.

^o *Hir rude wes reid*.] Her colour or complexion was red.
 G. D. 408.

^p *Hir lyre*.] Her skin, bosom, or neck. The *lyre*, or *lure*, in vulgar speech, is the breast or bosom.

^q *Of lufe wes fillie*.] *Seile, sele*, in our old language, signifies *happy*. G. D. Also simple, weak.—The reader may take it in either sense.

^r *Had sworn hir deid*.] Should have doomed her to death.

^s *And skrapit at him*.] Scropit, mocked, or scorned.—

John Knox's Hist. p. 93.

^t *Murgeonit him*.] Made mouths at, or ridicyled him.

He wald haif *u* luftit, fcho wald not lat him,
 For all his zellow lokkis,
 He chereift hir, fcho bad gae *x* chat him,
 Scho *y* compt him not twa clokkis,
 Sa fchamefully his fchort *z* gown fet him,
 His *a* lymis wer lyk two rokkis,
 Scho faid,
 At Christis Kirk, &c.

V.

Tam Lutar wes thair menftral meit,
 O Lord, as he could *b* lanfs!

Y

He

u *Luft.*] Loved.

x *Gae chat him.*] Go to the gallows. G. D. 239.

y *Scho compt him not.*] She reckoned him not worth two clocks, or beetles.

z A short cloak or gown was the drefs of the time, and continued fo till the Reftoration in 1660.

a *His lymis.*] His legs were like two *rokkis*, or diftaffs; or, according to another Scottifh phrafe, he was *spindle-shanked*.

b *As he could lanfs.*] Skip. G. D. 297.—The meaning, as applicable to the minftrell, is explained in the next line,—
 “ He plaid fa fchrill.”

He playit fa fchill, and fang fa fweyt,
 Quhile *Toufy* tuke a *d* trans,
 Auld *Lightfute* thair he did *e* forleit,
 And *f* counterfuttet *Franfs* ;
 He used himself as man difcreit,
 And up tuke *g* *Moreifs* dans
 Full loud,
 At Christis Kirk, &c.

VI.

Then *Steven* cam steppand in with stendis,
 Na *b* rynk mycht him *i* arreift ;

Platefute

d *Take a trans.*] A hop or skip.—From Lat. probably of *transire*, to go acrofs.

e *Forleit.*] Forfake, or desert. G. D.—This applies to *Toufy* the dancer, who scorned to dance, like auld *Lightfute*, after the Scots fashion, or the *reel*, a well known meafure.

f *Counterfuttet Franfs.*] Aped to dance after the French mode.

g *Moreifs dans.*] *Morrice* or *Moorish* dances, rather of flow solemn movement, performed usually by *gipsies* after the Moorish manner.

b *Rynk, or rinker.*] A racer, or one swift of foot. G. D. 193.—Here it is used for a nimble person.

i *Arreift.*] Stay, or stop ; *i. e.* the most agile man of the company would not have ftopt or outdone him in the dance.

Platefute he bobit up with bendis,
 For *Mald* he made requiest,
 He *k* lap quhill he lay on his lendis,
 But ryfand he wes priest,
 Quhill that he *l* oifted at bayth endis,
 For honour of the feist
 At Christis Kirk, &c.

That day.

VII.

Syne *Robene Roy* *m* begouth to *m* revell,
 And *Downy* till him *n* druggit ;

Let

k *He lap.*] Leapt.—B. Gibson says gravely, that “the word *lap* signifies *lapt*, or *supped*, from the Cimbric word *le-pia, lingua*, i. e. *lambendo bibere*.” Nothing is more vague or fanciful than etymological derivations. No Scotfman but knows, that *lap* is the perfect of the verb *to leap*. The obvious sense of the passage is, “He *lap* and capered so high, that he fell at his length ; and, in rising, was so pressed, that after the well known vulgar Scots phrase,—he

l *Oifted.*] *Hofted*, or coughed at baith ends, (*i. e.* broke wind) in honour of the feast.” A coarse, though most humorous picture !

m *Revell.*] Began to turn riotous.

n *Druggit.*] Dragged *Downy* towards him.

172 CHRISTIS KIRK OF THE GRENE.

Let be, quo *Jok*, and *o* caw'd him javell,
 And be the taill him *p* tuggit,
 The kensy *q* cleikit to the cavell,
 Bot, lord, than how thay *r* luggit!
 Thay partit manly with a *s* nevell,
 God wait gif hair was ruggit
 Betwix thame
 At Christis Kirk, &c.

VIII.

Ane bent a bow, sic *t* sturt coud *u* steir him,
 * Grit skayth wes'd to haif skard him,

He

o *Caw'd him javell.*] Javeller; probably a quarrelsome fellow.

p *Tuggit.*] Pulled him by the tail of his cloak.

q *Cleikit.*] Snatched up. A common Scots phrase.—*Cavell*, or gavell, probably a cudgel or rung.

r *Luggit.*] Pulled each other by the ears.

s *Nevell.*] A blow with the fist.—Most of the above words, being vulgar, are now obsolete, and not to be found in any glossary. Their meaning, however, may easily be conjectured.

t *Sturt.*] Trouble, disturbance, vexation. G. D. p. 41. 219. 19.

u *Steir him.*] Move, or provoke him.

x *Grit skayth wes'd.*] It would have been dangerous, or attended with skait, to have skar'd or hindered him.

CHRISTIS KIRK OF THE GRENE. 173

He cheset a *y* flane as did affeir him,
The *z* toder said *dir-dum dardum!*
Throw baith the cheikis he thocht to *a* cheir him,
Or throw the erfs heif chard him,
Bot be ane *b* *aikerbraid* it cam not *neir* him,
I can nocht tell quhat marr'd him
Thair,
At Christis Kirk, &c.

IX.

With that a freynd of his cry'd, fy!
And up ane arrow drew,
He *c* forgit it sa furiously,
The bow in *d* flenderis flew ;

Sa

y He chused an arrow, as did effeir, belong to, or was fit for his purpose.

z *The toder.*] The other, in great fright, bauld out *dir-dum dardum!*—Confusion! Blood and murder!

a *Cheir*, and *chard*, are obsolete words. We may conjecture their meaning, from the sense of the passage,—to bore, or to pierce.

b *Be ane aikerbraid it cam not neir him.*] The humour here is very arch.

c *Forgit it sa furiously.*] From *forgere*, to fabricate. Here it means, “ He drew his bow with great fury, threatening slaughter and death !”

d *In flenderis.*] A Scots word used at this day ; *i. e.* the bow flew in splinters.

CHRISTIS KIRK OF THE GRENE. 175

For he eschapit, *k* throw michts of Mary,
As man that na ill meynd,
But gude,
At Christis Kirk, &c.

XI.

Then *Lowry* as ane lyon lap,
And sone a *l* flane can feddir,

He

k *Throw michts of Mary.*] Through the power and assistance of St Mary.—A common saying.

The foregoing figures are introduced with great humour, and happily varied: *Touffe's* solemn *Moresco*; *Steven's* entry, or high dance; and *Platefute's sandango* with *Mauld*, his downfall, and misbehaviour, are all highly comic. Again, the aukwardness of the *bowmen*, showing that they had quite fallen out of the use of managing the bow, is satirised in the keenest strokes of irony. The serious affected gravity of the poet, particularly in his arch reflection, "Such was the will of Providence," &c. are fine ironical touches. The whole shows that the poet was master of every species of humour and ridicule,

Whether he takes *Cervantes's* serious air,
Or laughs and shakes in *Rabélais's* easy chair.

These great masters of ridicule lived a century later than King James, whose genuine vein of humour flows full and entire from his own native genius. Genius is confined to no age nor clime.

l And soon feathered an arrow.

He *m* hecht to pers him at the pap,

n Theron to wed a weddir,

He hit him on the *o wame* a wap,

It *bust* lyk ony bledder ;

But sua his fortune was and hap,

His doublit wes maid of ledder,

And faist him

At Chryftis Kirk, &c.

XII.

m Hecht.] Promised, meant to hit him on the pap.

n To wed, or wad.] To pledge.—To wad a wedder, seems to be to pledge or wager a wedder. Hence a *wadset*, or land given in pledge.

It may be conjectured, that, when archery was in vogue amongst the lairds or gentry, it would be a common pastime to shoot at butts for prizes ; and that a sheep or wedder, or, in other words, a dinner, as at present, might be the common prize or wager. The 18th act of King James I. first parliament, alludes probably to such a custom. It enacts, “ That wha uses not archery, on the appointed holy days “ for shooting, the *laird* of the land, or *sheriff*, fall raise of “ him a wedder.”

o A wap on the wame.] A well known Scots phrase for a blow on the belly, a stroke not deadly, making a sound like that made on a blown-up bladder.

XII.

The buff so boisterously *p* abaift him,
 That he to the eard *q* duft down,
 The uther man for deid then left him,
 And fled out o' the toune;
 The wyves cam furth, and up they *r* reft him,
 And *s* fand lyfe in the lounne,
 Then with three *t* routis up they reft him,
 And cur'd him of his foune
u Fra hand that day,
 At Christis Kirk, &c.

Z

XIII.

p *Abaift.*] Stunned, amazed him.

q *Duft down.*] *Dafst*, (Engl.) Fell suddenly down.

r *Reft him.*] Pulled him up.—I scarce think our poet would have used the same words in the second verse after this.

s *Fand life in the lounne.*] The rogue, who only feigned himself in a swoon.

t *With three routis.*] Or loud bellows like an ox, they raised him up, and brought him out of his pretended swoon.

u *Fra hand.*] Or out of hand; instantly.

The 12th stanza, as above, I have supplied from B. Gibson's edition; I doubt, however, if it is genuine, as it is not in *Banantyne's MS.* However, as it naturally connects with the former stanza, and the same vein of humour runs through it, I give it to the reader. A few of the words, which Gibson had modernized from the old Scots orthography, I have restored.

XIII.

A ^x yaip young man, that stude him neist,
 Lous'd aff a schott with yre,
 He ^y ettlit the ^z bern in at the breist,
^a The bolt flew ou'r the byre,
 Ane cry'd fy! he had flane a ^b priest
 A myle beyond ane myre;
 Then bow and ^c bag fra him he keist,
 And fled as ferfs as fyre
 Of flint,
 At Christis Kirk, &c.

XIV.

^x *Yaip.*] Or *yaip*; eager, ready, alert. G. D. p. 409.
20.

^y *Ettled the bern.*] He tried or aimed to shoot the lad in the breast.

^z *Bern.*] Bairn, often for a young man, as in G. D. 439.
22.

^a *The bolt.*] Shaft, or arrow.

^b *Fy! he has flane a priest.*] The worst or most atrocious of all murders.

^c *Bag.*] The quiver which held his arrows.

Since the introduction of fire-arms, the use of the bow in war is now quite laid aside, and even as an exercise of sport probably be soon forgotten. There remains still one, ^y one society in this kingdom, where archery is kept up,

XIV.

With forks and flails they lent grit flappis,
 And flang togidder lyk *d* friggis,
 With *e* bougars of barnis they best blew kappis,
 Quhyle thay of *f* bernis maid briggis ;
 The *g* reird rais rudely with the rapps,
b Quhen rungis wer layd on riggis,
 The wyffis cam furth with cryis and clappis,
 ' Lo quhair my lyking ligs,
 Quo thay,
 At Chrystis Kirk, &c.

XV.

up, the *Royal Company of Archers*, which always did, and at present can boast of having the chief of the Scottish nobility and gentry inrolled amongst its members. Long may this ancient institution flourish! and the manly exercise of the bow, the care of so gallant a monarch as James I. be preserved, and transmitted down to latest posterity!

d Friggis.] *i. e.* They bickered or pelted each other with stones.

e Bougars of barnis.] Rafters of barns dang aff blue caps.

f Of bernis maid briggis.] Made bridges or stepping-stones (according to the Scots phrase) of the berns or lads that fell down.

g The reird, or noise.

b When rungis.] Were laid across their backs, or riggings.

i Lo where my love lies.

XV.

Thay gyrrit and *k* lait gird with grainis,
l Ilk gossip uder grievit,
 Sum strak with stings, sum gatherit stainis,
 Sum fled and *m* ill mischevit;
 The *menstral* wan within twa wainis,
 That day full weil *n* he previt,
 For he cam hame with *o* unbirst bainis,
 Quhair *p* fechtaris wer mischievit
 For evir,
 At Christis Kirk, &c.

XVI.

Heich *Hutchon* with a *q* hissil ryfs,
 To *r* red can throw thame rummill,

He

k *Lait gird.*] Let drive, or gave a stroke. G. D. From the A. Saxon *gerd*, to strike with a rod or stick.

l *Ilk gossip.*] Companion, grieved or hurt his neighbour.

m *Ill mischiev'd.*] Sore hurt, or bruised.

n *He previt.*] *i. e.* Proved himself a cautious man, that kept himself out of the fray.

o *Unbirst bainis.*] Unbruised bones.

p *Fechtaris.*] Fighters.

q *Hissil ryfs.*] A hazel rung or sapling. *Ryce* signifies young, or branch-wood.

r *To red.*] To separate or part the combatants, he rumbled or rushed through them.

He *s* muddlit thame doun lyk ony myfs,
 He wes na *t* baity bummil ;
 Thoch he wes *u* wight, he wes nocht wyfs
 With sic jangleurs to jummil,
 For fra his thowme thay dang a sklyfs,
 Quhile he *x* cryed *barlafummil*,
 I am flane,
 At Christis Kirk, &c.

XVII.

Quhen that he saw his blude fa reid,
 To fle might na man *y* let him,
 He *z* weind it bene for auld done feid,
 He thocht ane cryed, haif at him !

He

s Muddlit.] Overturned, drove them down like mice before him.

t Baity bummil.] A bungler or bungler of any piece of work.

u Tho' wight or stout.] Yet he was not wise to mix or interfere with such janglers or wranglers.

x Cry'd barlafummil.] A Scots phrase, in use among boys in their sports for a stop or cessation. When one trips or stumbles, they cry *barle* ; probably from the Fr. word *parler*, and *sumle* a fall. G. D.

y Let.] Stop, hinder.

z Weind.] He thought or imagined it done, in retaliation of some former feid, offence, or ill will.

182 CHRISTIS KIRK OF THE GRENE.

He ^a gart his *feit* defend his *heid*,
The far fairer it set him,
Quhyle he wes past out of all ^b pleid,
^c He suld bene swift that gat him
Throw speid,
At Christis Kirk, &c.

XVIII.

The town *soutar* in grief wes ^d bowdin,
His wyfe ^e hang in his waift,
His body wes with blud all ^f browdin,
He grainit lyk ony gairt;
Hir glitterand hair that wes full gowdin,
Sa hard in lufe him ^g laift,

That

^a " *He gart his feit defend his heid,*

" *The far fairer it set him.*"—It set or became him better to take to his heels than to fight.—The humour here is extremely arch.

^b *Past all pleid.*] Out of all challenge or opposition. G. D. 111.

^c He would have been swift of foot that could lay hold of him.

^d *Bowdin, or bodyn.*] Full of, or swelled with rage. G. D. *voce* Bodin.

^e Hung at, or clung to his waift.

^f *Browden.*] Besmeared or embroidered.

^g *Laift.*] Laced.

XX.

Twa that wer *berdsmen* of the herd,
 Ran upon udderis lyk rammis,
 Than followit *n* feymen richt unaffeird,
 Bet on with barrow trammis,
 But quhair thair *o* gobbis wer ungeird,
 Thay gat upon the *p* gammis,
 Quhyle bludy berkit wes thair baird,
 As thay had worriet lammis
 Maift lyk,
 At Christis Kirk, &c.

XXI.

The *wyves* keft up a hideous yell,
 When all thir younkeris yokkit,
 Als ferfs as ony *q* fyre flaughts fell,
r Freiks to the field thay flokit ;

The

n *Feymen*.] Unhappy, mischievous. G. D.—Foolish.
Skene.

o *Gobbis*, or *gabbis* were *ungeird*.] Where their cheeks or
 gabs were bare or undefended.

p They got upon the *gammis*, or gums.

q *Fyre flaughts*.] Flashes of lightning.

r *Freiks*.] Light-headed, freakish, forward fellows. G.
 D.

The carlis with clubbis coud udir quell,
 Quhyle blude at breiftis out s bokkit,
 Sa rudely rang the common bell,
 Quhyll all the fteipill t rokit
 For u reid,
 At Christis Kirk, &c.

A a

XXII.

s *Bokkit.*] Vomited.

t *Rockit.*] Shook.

u *For reid.*] Or *rade*, warfare. Hence the *Raid of Ruthven*; the *Raid of the Reid-squair*; skirmishes or scuffles.

In B. Gibson's edition are the two following stanzas, which are not contained in Banantyne's MS. I take them both to be spurious. It is plain that the Bishop has followed, an English copy of the King's poem, as many words occur in it which were never used in Scotland. I shall, however, give the two following stanzas; as they stand in Gibson's edition:

By this *Tom Tailor* was in his gear,
 When he heard the common bell,
 He said he should make them all on stear
 When he came there himsell:
 He went to fight with such a fear,
 While to the ground he fell,
 * A wife that hit him to the ground
 With a great knocking-mell,

Fell'd him that day.

* Our poet, who, through the whole of this poem, is very exact in his rhimes, would scarce have made a false one

XXII.

Quhyn thay had * berit lyk baitit bullis,
 And y branewod z brynt in bails,

Thay

in the seventh line here; nor would he have used the word *ground*, both in the sixth and seventh line, besides the absurdity of *Tom Tailor's* first falling to the ground, and then his wife hitting him to the ground, and, lastly, *selling* him!

The bridegroom brought a pint of aile,
 And bade the pyper drink it;
 Drink it, quoth he, and it so stail,
 Ashrew me if I think it.
 The bride her maidens flood near by,
 And said it was not blinked,
 And Bartagasic, the bride so gay,
 Upon him fast she winked

Full soon that day.

The nonsense and awkward absurdity of this spurious stanza is so obvious, that it is to be wondered how Gibson could adopt it as genuine!

* *Berit.*] Perhaps bearded or baited each other, like bulls.

y *Branewod.*] Or distempered in their brains.

z *Brynt, or burnt in bails, or in flame.*] The phrase seems now quite obsolete.

Thay wer als meik as ony mulis
a That mangit wer with mailis ;
 } For faintness tha forfochtin fulis
 Fell down lyk *c* flauchtir failis,
 And fresch men cam in and *d* hail'd the dulis,
 And *e* dang tham down in dailis
f Bedene,
 At Christis Kirk, &c.

XXIII.

Quhen all wes done, *Dik* with ane aix
 Cam furth to fell a *g* fuddir,

Quod

a Meik as mules, that are tired, and manged or galled with mails or heavy burdens.

b Forfochtin fulis.] These fools that had tired themselves with fighting.

c Fell lyk flauchtir fails.] Or turfs, cast with a spade well known in Scotland, called the *flaucher spade*.

d Hail'd the dulis.] A well-known phrase at foot-ball. When the ball touches the goal or mark, the winner calls out, *Hail!* or it has hailed the *dule*, or *dail*.

e Dang them down in heaps.

f Bedene, or *bedeen,* instantly ; out of hand.

g Fudir, or *futhir.*] A load or heap.—Perhaps from *fouth*, a vulgar Scots word for plenty, or many in number.

Quod he, quhair ar yon *b* hangit smaix,
 Rycht now wald flane my bruder :
 His wyf bad him ga hame, *i* Gib glaiks,
 And fa did *Meg* his muder,
 He turnit and gaif them bayth thair *k* paikis,
 For he durft ding nane udir,
 For feir,
 At Christis Kirk of the Grene that day.

b This epithet is now obsolete.

i *Gibby glaiks.*] Light-headed, foolish *braggadochio*.

k For which he gave the women their *paiks*, or a drubbing, as he durft not *ding* or encounter any others.

F I N I S.

Quod King James I.

The foregoing notes were written prior to the publication of Mr *Callender's* edition of the poem of *Christ's Kirk*, with which work the present scarcely interferes. The learned etymological researches of that gentleman tend to open a more important object to view, by endeavouring to trace our old Scottish language, and its parent the Anglo-Saxon, up to the radical and universal language of mankind, before their dispersion from the plains of *Shinaar*. A very ample field, it must be confessed, for etymological learning.—The present humble essay aims only at the illustration of the sense and design of *King James's Poem*.

THE Scots poet *Allan Ramsay*, the author of the *Gentle Shepherd*, has added two cantos to King *James's* poem of *Christ's Kirk of the Green*, in which he has, with a great deal of fancy and humour, carried on the story from the end of the fray, where the King breaks off, by entering into the humours of a country wedding, with the frolics usual on such occasional festivals. He adopts most of the characters introduced by the King in his poem, and it must be owned that he has carried them through with much mirth and drollery, though often not with decency. His humour, though highly comic and natural, is, however, different from the fine arch vein of pleantry which flows through the King's Poem.

Ramsay was a man of strong natural, though few acquired parts, possessed of much humour, and native poetic fancy. Born in a pastoral country, he had strongly imbibed the manners and humours of that life. As I knew him well, an honest man,
and

and of great pleasantry, it is with peculiar satisfaction I seize this opportunity of doing justice to his memory, in giving testimony to his being the author of the *Gentle Shepherd*, which, for the natural ease of the dialogue, the propriety of the characters, perfectly similar to the pastoral life in Scotland, the picturesque scenery, and, above all, the simplicity and beauty of the fable, may justly rank amongst the most eminent pastoral dramas that our own or any other nation can boast of. Merit will ever be followed by detraction. The envious tale, that the *Gentle Shepherd* was the joint composition of some wits with whom *Ramsay* conversed, is without truth. It might be sufficient to say, that none of these gentlemen have left the smallest fragment behind them that can give countenance to such a claim. While I passed my infancy at *Newhall*, near *Pentland Hills*, where the scenes of this pastoral poem are laid, the seat of Mr *Forbes*, and the resort of many of the *literati* at that time, I well remember to have heard *Ramsay* recite, as his own production, different scenes of the *Gentle Shepherd*, particularly the two first, before it was printed. I believe my honourable friend Sir *James Clerk* of *Pennycuik*, where *Ramsay* frequently resided, and who I know is possessed of several original poems composed by him, can give the same testimony.

P. S.

P. S. The above note was shown to Sir *James Clerk*, and had his approbation. By the late death of that gentleman, not his friends only, but the Public, have lost a valuable member of society. To an innate goodness of heart, and simplicity of manners, was joined in him a superior taste in the fine arts; in architecture, sculpture, painting, and music. *Pennycuik House*, built from a plan designed by himself, is an illustration of the *simplex munditiis*, the plain and elegant style in architecture. The disposition of the grounds, the woods, lawns, water, and ornaments, are the result of a chaste and elegant taste, formed on the justest rules.

— *Servare modum, finemque tueri,
Naturamque sequi.*

This small tribute is due to his memory, from one whom he long honoured with his intimate friendship.





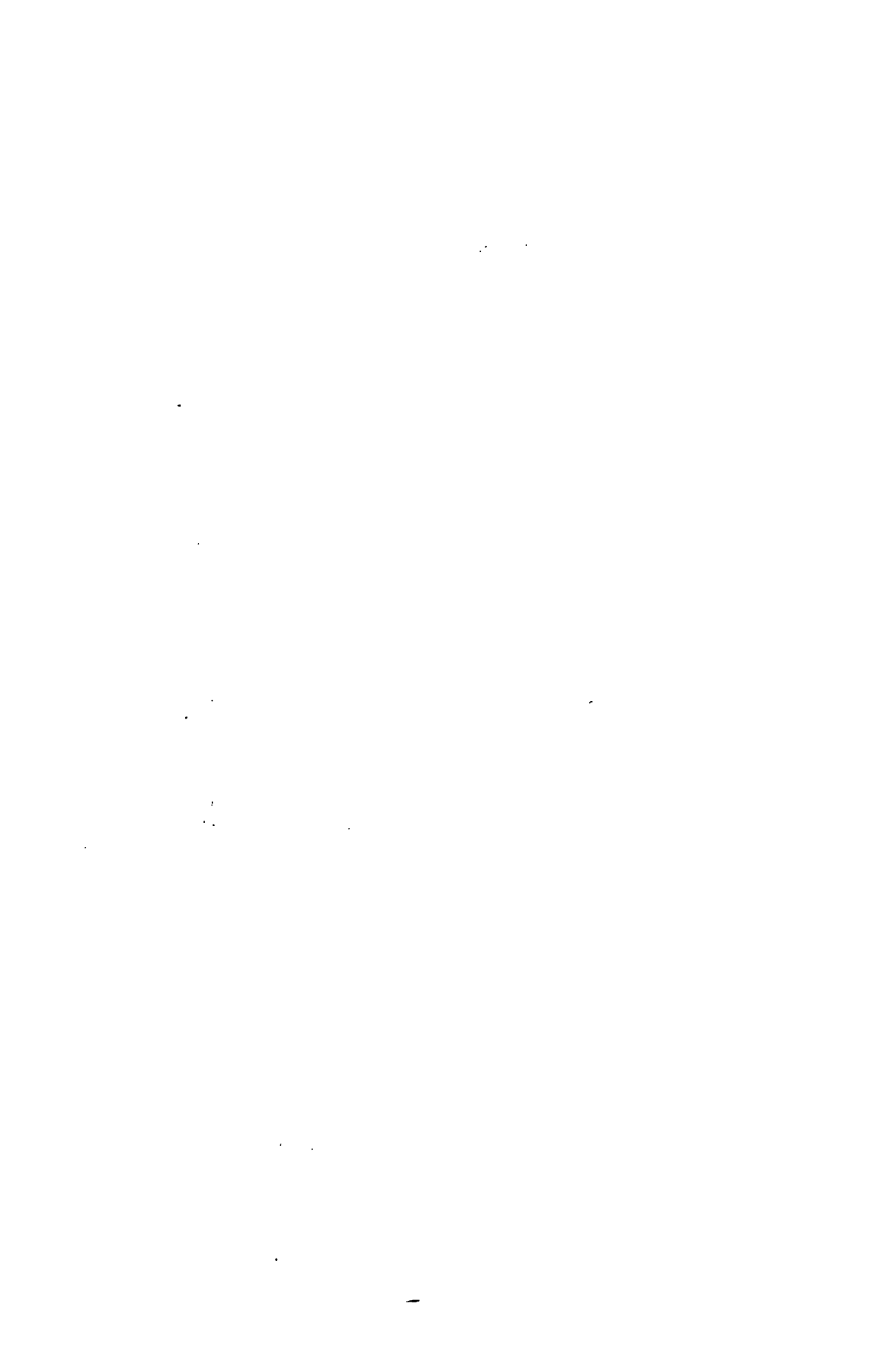
D I S S E R T A T I O N

O N T H E

S C O T T I S H M U S I C .



B b



D I S S E R T A T I O N

O N T H E

S C O T T I S H M U S I C.

——Nugaeque Canorae.



Nostras nec erubuit Silvas habitare Thalia.

VIRG.

THE genius of the Scots has, in every age, shone conspicuous in Poetry and Music. Of the first, the Poems of *Offian*, composed in an age of rude antiquity, are sufficient proof. The peevish doubt entertained by some of their authenticity, appears to be the utmost refinement of scepticism. As genuine remains of *Celtic* Poetry, the Poems of *Offian* will continue to be admired as long as there shall remain a taste for the *sublime and beautiful*.

The

The Scottish *Music* does no less honour to the genius of the country. The old Scottish songs have always been admired for the wild pathetic sweetness which distinguishes them from the music of every other country. I mean, in this Essay, to try to fix the æra of our most ancient melodies, and to trace the history of our music down to modern times. In a path so untrodden, where scarce a track is to be seen to lead the way, the surest guide I have to follow is the music itself, and a few authorities which our old historians afford us. After all, the utmost I aim at is probability; and, perhaps, by some hints, I may lead others to a more direct road.

From their artless simplicity, it is evident, that the Scottish melodies are derived from very remote antiquity. The vulgar conjecture, that *David Rizio* was either the composer or reformer of the Scottish songs, has of late been so fully exposed, that I need say very little to confute it. That the science of music was well understood, and that we had great masters, both theorists and performers, above a century before Rizio came to Scotland, I shall immediately shew. He is by no contemporary writer said to have been a composer. He is not even extolled as a great performer; nor does
 tradition

tradition point him out as the author of any one particular song; and, although we should allow him to have had ability, the short time he was in Scotland, scarce three years, was too busy with him to admit of such amusement.—Let us endeavour to trace back our music to its origin.

The origin of music, in every country, is from the woods and lawns*.

The simplicity and wildness of several of our old Scottish melodies, denote them to be the production of a pastoral age and country, and prior to the

* The rise of music is so beautifully described by *Lucretius*, that the classical reader will excuse the following quotation.

At liquidas avium voces imitaries ore
 Ante fuit multo, quam laevia carmina cantu,
 Concelebrare homines possent, aureisque juvare :
 Et zephyri cava per calamorum sibila primum
 Agresteis docuere cavas inflare cicutas,
 Inde minutatim dulcis didicere querelas,
 Tibia quas fundit digitis pulsata canentum,
 Avia per nemora, ac silvas saltusque reperta,
 Per loca pallorum deserta, atque otia dia.

LUCRET. lib. 5.

the use of any musical instrument beyond that of a very limited scale of a few natural notes, and prior to the knowledge of any rules of artificial music. This conjecture, if solid, must carry them up to a high period of antiquity.

The most ancient of the Scottish songs, still preserved, are extremely simple, and void of all art. They consist of one measure only, and have no second part, as the later or more modern airs have. They must, therefore, have been composed for a very simple instrument, such as the shepherd's reed or pipe, of few notes, and of the plain *diatonic scale*, without using the semitones, or sharps and flats. The distinguishing strain of our old melodies is plaintive and melancholy; and what makes them soothing and affecting, to a great degree, is the constant use of the concordant tones, the third and fifth of the scale, often ending upon the fifth, and some of them on the sixth of the scale. By this artless standard some of our old Scottish melodies may be traced; such as *Gil Morice—There cam a ghost to Marg'et's door—O laddie, I man loo' thee—Hap me wi' thy pettycoat*—I mean the old sets of these airs, as the last air, which I take to be one of our oldest songs, is so modernized as scarce to have a trace of its ancient simplicity. The simple
original

original air is still sung by nurfes in the country, as a lullaby to still their babes to sleep. It may be said, that the words of some of these songs denote them to be of no very ancient date: But it is well known, that many of our old songs have changed their original names, by being adapted to more modern words. Some old tunes have a second part; but it is only a repetition of the first part on the higher octave; and these additions are probably of more modern date than the tunes themselves.

That the science of Music, and the rules of composition, were known amongst us before the 15th century, is certain. *King James the First* of Scotland is celebrated by all the Scottish historians, not only as an excellent performer, but as a great theorist in Music, and a composer of airs to his own verses. ‘ Hic etenim in musica (says Fordun) ‘ in artis perfectione, in tympano et choro, in psalterio et organo, ad summam perfectionis magisterium, natura creatrix, ultra humanam aestimationem, ipsum vivaciter decoravit.’ *Scoticron. vol. 2. lib. 16. cap. 28.*—Fordun has a whole chapter, the 29th of his history, on King James’s learning and knowledge in the ancient Greek, as well as in the more modern scales of music, which, for its curiosity,

fity, is worthy to be read by the modern theorists in music.

The next authority is *John Major*, who celebrates King James I. as a poet, a composer, and admirable performer of music. Major affirms, that, in his time, the verses and songs of that Prince were esteemed amongst the first of the Scottish melodies. I shall give the whole passage :

‘ In vernacula lingua artificiosissimus compositor; cujus codices plurimi, et cantilenae, memoriter adhuc apud Scotos inter primos habentur.—Artificiosam cantilenam (composuit) *Yas sen*, &c. et jucundum artificiosumque illum cantum, at *Beltayn*, quem alii de *Dalketh* et *Gargeil* mutare studuerunt, quia in arce, aut camera, clausus ferebatur, in qua mulier cum matre habitabat.’

It is a pity that neither the words nor the music of these celebrated ballads have come down to us. According to the historian, the last must have been full of humour, and extremely popular; his words may imply, that several parodies or imitations of the subject had been made, which time has likewise deprived us of.



Amongst

Amongst the number of our old Scottish melodies, it is, I think, scarce to be doubted, that many of King James's compositions, which were esteemed amongst *the first of the age*, are still remaining, and make a part of our finest old melodies; but as no tradition down to our time has ascertained them, they, in all probability, pass undistinguished under other names, and are adapted to modern words. There can be little doubt, however, that most of James's compositions have shared the same fate with many other old airs. Taffoni, the Italian poet, as afterwards mentioned, says expressly, that 'King James composed many 'sacred pieces of vocal music,' which are now lost. All our old heroic ballads, such as *Hardiknute*, and others, were undoubtedly sung to *chants* composed for them, which are now lost. Among those still preserved, are the episodes of *Offian*, which are at this day sung in the Highlands. *Gill Morrice—The Flowers of the Forest—Hero and Leander, &c.* are still sung to their original pathetic strains. These, however, are but a few of many old ballads whose airs are now unknown. In the MS. collection of Scottish Poems, made by Banatyne before the 1568, the donation of the Earl of Hyndford to the Advocates Library, at Edinburgh, the favourite poem, *The Cherry and the Slae*, and like-

wife a poem of Sir Richard Maitland of Lethington, father to the famous Secretary Maitland, are entitled, ‘ To be sung to the tune of the *Banks of Helicon.*’ This must have been a well-known tune 200 years ago, as it was sung to such popular words; but it is now lost. It cannot exist under other words, as the metrical stanza of the Cherry and the Slae is so particular, that I know no air at this day that could be adapted to it. We find also, in old books, many names of songs, yet neither of the verses or tunes do we know any thing at this day. *Gavin Douglas*, in his prologue to the 12th *Æneid*, recites the beginning words of three well-known songs in his time, 1480, thus:

‘ The schip failis over the salt fame,
 ‘ Will bring thir merchandis and my leman hame.’
 ——— ‘ I will be blyith and licht,
 ‘ My hert is lent upon fa gudly wicht.’
 ——— ‘ I come hidder to wow.’

And, in the prologue to 13th *Æneid*,

——— ‘ The jolly day now dawis.’

In the same way a great many of King James I.’s poetical pieces are now lost, or, perhaps, as
 his

his poem of *Christ's Kirk of the Green*, may erroneously be ascribed to others.

It may be suspected, from the above high-trained authorities, that his countrymen have rather allowed themselves to be carried too far in displaying the qualifications of their King. I shall, however, produce the testimony of a foreigner, a celebrated author, who does James still more honour than the writers of his own country; and, singular as the proposition may appear, I shall endeavour to prove, that the Scottish melodies, so far from being either invented or improved by an *Italian* master, were made the models of imitation in the finest vocal compositions of one of the greatest masters of composition in Italy.

The celebrated *Carlo Gesualdo*, Prince of Venosa, formerly Venusium, famous as the place of birth of Horace, flourished about the middle or towards the end of the 16th century, and died in 1614. *Blancanus*, in his *Chronologia-Mathematicorum*, thus distinguishes him: ‘ The most noble Carolus
 ‘ Gesualdus, Prince of Venusium, was the prince
 ‘ of musicians of our age; he having recalled the
 ‘ *Rythme* into music, introduced such a stile of
 ‘ modulation,

‘ modulation, that other musicians yielded the pre-
 ‘ ference to him ; and all fingers and players on
 ‘ stringed instruments, laying aside that of others,
 ‘ every where eagerly embraced his music *.’—He
 is also celebrated by Merfennus, Kircher, and al-
 most all the writers of that age, as one of the most
 learned and greatest composers of vocal music in his
 time.

’ To apply this account of the Prince of Venosa
 to the present subject.—*Alessandro Tassoni*, in his
Pensieri Diversi, lib. 10. thus expresses himself:
 ‘ We may reckon among us moderns *James King*
 ‘ of Scotland, who not only composed many sacred
 ‘ pieces of vocal music, but also, of himself, invent-
 ‘ ed a new kind of music, plaintive and melancholy,
 ‘ different from all other ; in which he has been
 ‘ imitated by Carlo Gesualdo, Prince of Venosa,
 ‘ who in our age has improved music with new
 ‘ and admirable inventions †.’

How

* Sir J. Hawkins, vol. 3. p. 212.

† ‘ Noi ancora possiamo connumerar, tra nostri, *Jacopo*
 ‘ *Re di Scozia*, che non pur cose sacre campose in canto, ma
 ‘ trova da se stesso, una nuova musica, lamentevole e mesta,
 ‘ differente da tutte l'altr.: Nel che poi e stato imitato da
 ‘ *Carlo*

How perfectly characteristic, this, of the pathetic strains of the old Scottish songs ! What an illustrious testimony to their excellency !

Some of the Dilettanti, in the Italian music of the present times, may perhaps sneer at being told, that the *Italians*, the restorers of music, owe the improvement of their music to the early introduction of Scottish melody into it : Yet nothing is more certain, not only from the candid acknowledgment of Tassoni, but from the testimony of the
 Italian

‘ *Carlo Gesualdo, Principe di Venosa*, che in questa, nostra età ha illustrata anch’ egli la musica con nuove mirabili invenzioni.’—Let me here do justice to the restorer of this record, who, next to Tassoni, deserves the thanks of every Scotsman ; I mean the late *Patrick Lord Elibank* : For although Tassoni is well known as a poet, particularly by his celebrated *la fechia rapita*, the first of the modern mock heroic poems, yet his book *De Diversi Penfieri*, though printed near two centuries ago, and containing a great deal of learned and curious observations, is but little known on this side of the Alps : And the above curious passage, which had so long escaped the notice of every Scotsman, might quietly have slept in the dark repose of great libraries, had not the penetrating research of this learned Nobleman, about twenty years ago, produced it to light. From him I had a copy of that passage, since published by Sir John Hawkins.

Italian music itself before the Prince of Venosa's time, as I shall attempt to illustrate.

It is at this day no longer a question, that the art of composition in parts, or what is called *harmony*, is the invention of the moderns ; but by whom invented, or at what particular aera, is not so clear. As the cultivation of modern music was chiefly among the ecclesiastics, on account of the church services daily in use to be sung by them, the rules of harmony undoubtedly took their rise, and were improved among them. *Guido d'Arezzo*, a Benedictine monk, about the beginning of the eleventh century, is, by many authors, said to have reformed the scale, by introducing the lines and the notation on them by points, instead of the letters of the alphabet, formerly in use ; from which the name of *counterpoint*, for the art of composition in parts, is derived. From that period, it was by degrees improved, until it was brought to perfection in the golden age of the restoration of other polite arts and sciences in Italy, the Pontificate of Leo X. At this time flourished the *venerable Palestrina*, stiled the *father of harmony* ; and in the same century, though later, the Prince of Venosa, mentioned above. As the productions of a harmonist and thorough master of the art of counterpoint,

counterpoint, the compositions of Palestrina, even at this day, strike us with admiration by their artful fugues, and the full and sublime harmony of their parts. Nothing in the church stile, except the grandeur and loftiness of the choruses of the late great *Handel*, can exceed them: Yet, in one great point, the music of Palestrina is deficient. We may be entertained with the artful contrivance and learning of a well wrought *fugue*, or elevated by the harmony of a full choir of voices, yet still melody or air is wanting in the music of the venerable Palestrina. To any person versant in the compositions of the great masters of harmony in Palestrina's time, there will appear the same stile, artful contrivance, and learning, running through every species of their compositions; their *massa's*, *motetti*, *madrigals*, and *canons*. The harmony is full, but they are deficient in melody*.

I

* Although Palestrina is with propriety stiled the Father of Harmony in Italy, as, by the solemn grandeur of his harmony, and fine contrivances, he certainly carried the art of counterpoint far beyond any thing known before the age of Leo X. yet it is but justice to say, that harmonic composition flourished in several parts of Europe besides Italy, and that there existed several eminent masters, even before the time of Palestrina. *Lewis Guicciardin*, (nephew of Francis,

I do not remember to have seen any cantata, or song for a single voice, of the age of Palestrina.

The

Francis, the historian) who was contemporary with Palestrina, and died before him in 1589, as cited by *Abbé de Bois*, in his *Critical Reflections*, gives a list of several eminent Flemish composers; and adds, that, in his time, it was the practice in the Netherlands, and had been a custom there of long standing, to furnish Europe with musicians. The old church services, that had long been in use both in England and Scotland, several of which still exist, are solid proofs of the profound knowledge of our old composers in counterpoint, before the time of Palestrina. The church services of *Marbeck*, and of *Tallis*, who was organist to Henry VIII. are original and learned, and abound in fine harmony. *Geminiani*, that great musical genius, on hearing *Tallis's* anthem, ' *I call and cry,*' is said to have exclaimed, in rapture, ' The man who made this must have been inspired!' No less eminent was *Birde*, the scholar of *Tallis*, and several others mentioned by *Morley*, in his *Introduction to Practical Music*, in the number of which *Morley* himself may be ranked. From that time a continued succession of very eminent composers in the church stile, through the reigns of Queen Elizabeth, King James, and Charles I. have flourished.—To digress a little on the subject of the English music. The science of music, from the earliest ages, appears to have been patronised by the Kings of England; hence the study of music became a branch of education, through every rank, from the Prince downwards, inasmuch that the gentleman who had not been taught music was judged

The Italian music for private entertainment, at that time, seems to have been the *madrigal*, usually

D d composed

judged to be deficient in his education. *Morley*, whose excellent book was printed in 1597, mentioning, in his introductory dialogue, in what universal use and reputation skill in music was then held, makes *Philomathes* thus speak: ‘ Being at a banquet, supper being ended, and music-books, according to custom, brought to table, the mistress of the house presented me with a part, earnestly intreating me to sing; but when, after many excuses, I protested unfeignedly that I could not, every one began to wonder, yea some whispered to others, demanding how I was brought up.’—In *Peacham’s Complete Gentleman*, a book held in great esteem in the reign of *James I.* the author requires of his gentleman ‘ to be able to sing his part sure, and at sight, and withal to play the same on the viol or lute.’—In the following reign of *King Charles I.* both the knowledge and practice of music continued to be universal.—In *Walton’s Complete Angler*, a book which contains many curious facts and critical observations relating to the times, the learned and ingenious annotator, Sir John Hawkins, mentions the following:—‘ In an old book of *enigma’s*, the solution of one of them is a *barber*, who is represented by a wooden cut as shaving a person, while another, who is waiting for his turn, is playing on a lute, and on the wall hangs another lute or cittern.’ This fact, says the annotator, explains a passage in *Ben Jonson’s Silent Woman*, which none of his editors seem to have understood. *Morose*, in Act 3. Scene 5. cries out, ‘ That cursed barber! I have
‘ married

composed for some favourite stanza or love verses of Petrarcha, Ariosto, or Tasso, commonly in the
fugue

‘ married his *cittern*, that’s common to all men.’ His editors Upton and Whaley, not understanding the manners of the time when Ben Johnson wrote, read the above, ‘ his *ci- stern* or reservoir.’—The music cultivated for private entertainment, at that time, was the Madrigal and Glee, in three or more parts, many of which still continue to be sung in several societies of vocal music. Their harmony is good, though generally languid and deficient in air.—The time was now at hand, when the triumph of harmony was to cease in England. The purity of the times would not admit of so superstitious an appendage to devotion, as music: When the *Book of Common Prayer*, of *Thankgivings*, and *Praises to God*, was condemned by the meeting of *Westminster Divines*, as ‘ a great hindrance to the preaching of the word *,’ the choral church service, of course, was expelled. The Psalms of David made a narrow escape: To strip them, however, of any pretence to music, it was enjoined the minister or clerk, ‘ to read the psalm, line by line, before ‘ the singing thereof.’ In conformity with these ordinances, the Parliament, 4th January 1644-5, repealed the statutes of Edward VI. and Queen Elizabeth, for uniformity in the *Common Prayer*, and ordained the same to be *abolished* and *disused* in every church and chapel throughout England and Wales. To follow out these ordinances, the organs were removed from the churches; and to put an end to the study

as

* Neal’s Hist. of the Puritans.—Nov. 1644.

fugue stile, and of three or four parts. The madrigal, when sung by proper voices, is soothing and

as well as practice of church music and harmony, the choral service-books were zealously collected together and destroyed. The painted glass windows, as favouring of idolatry, were broken down. It was well the churches themselves escaped demolition. The cathedral of St Paul's and other churches were converted into barracks and horse-quarters, and the porticoes were leased out for shops. Where had the muse of Milton now taken flight, who thus exclaims?

O! let my due feet never fail
 To walk the studious cloysters pale,
 And love the high embowed roof,
 With antique pillars massy proof,
 And storied windows richly dight,
 Casting a dim religious light;
 There let the pealing organ blow
 To the full-voic'd choir below,
 In service high and anthems clear,
 As may with sweetness through mine ear
 Dissolve me into extasies,
 And bring all heaven before mine eyes.

Il Penseroso.

Happily the reign of fanaticism was short. The year 1660 restored the liturgy, and with it re-established the choral church service, with the organs and choristers. The Italian opera had been established from the beginning of the century in Italy, and had now found its way into France.

Melody,

and pleasant ; but, wanting air, soon becomes languid and dull : A certain proof, this, that the music

Melody, in the songs for a single voice, with the recitative and chorus, attended with instrumental accompaniments, were novelties which began to be adopted by the English composers. On the Restoration, by the opening of the theatres, with music as their attendant, the national taste became much improved. Into the solemn, rigid, harmonic stile, a mixture of air and melody was introduced. The canon, the madrigal, and glee, gave way to airs for a single voice, duets, and catches, more suited to the convivial taste of the English. In the number of the old organists and chapel-masters, several fine composers appeared. Musical interludes were introduced into the old plays of Shakespear, and Beaumont and Fletcher. *Matthew Lock*, a chorister originally, and the composer of some fine anthems, set to music recitatives and songs for the incantation scenes of the witches in *Macbeth*, which for the expression of the words, particularly in the first recitative, ‘ *Speak, sister! speak!*’ and the solemnity and sweetness of the songs, and fullness of the chorus, may at this day be esteemed fine compositions.—*Michael Wise*, besides his anthems, which are excellent, composed some good duets and catches: His two-part song, *Old Chiron*, is well known.—*Purcell* next appeared; one of the greatest musical geniuses that England or any nation, either before or since his time, can boast of. *Purcell* was fond of the Italian music; and in that which he composed for the theatre, he certainly formed his taste on it. In his songs there is a mixture of recitative; but the recitative of *Purcell* (as *Lock*’s before him)

fic of Italy, at the above time, was altogether artificial and harmonic; and that *melody*, the soul of music,

him) exceeds in melody that of the Italian, which is often dry, and unvaried. In his cantata, ‘*From rose bowers,*’ the first recitative cannot be exceeded, either for melody or expression. In judging, however, between the Italian stage-music, and that of the English at this time, we must consider, that the Italian recitative, in their opera’s, was meant to express a sort of musical discourse, with proper regard to emphasis and cadence, without running into song, which in its part was kept distinct from any mixture of recitative. The English stage-music, or that of the interludes introduced into plays, was confined under no such strict rules; and, therefore, where the subject or words required expression, a mixture of recitative and air was agreeable and pleasing to an English ear. This seems to be the taste, very properly adopted by the English composers for the stage, at this time. The genius of Purcell was universal. For sublimity and grandeur in the church stile, his *Te Deum* and *Jubilata* will keep their rank while any taste for church music shall remain: For his stage-music, consisting of single-voice songs or cantatas, and songs of two and three parts, they are well known. His most applauded, are those made for *Dryden’s* King Arthur, the Tempest, Indian Queen, and Oedipus. That fine collection, the *Orpheus-Britannicus*, which contains most of his stage-songs, is in the hands of every lover of music. His love-songs are pathetic and tender, and finely varied; and his martial songs are most animating and spirited. His two-part song in the tragedy of Bonduca, ‘*To*

‘*arms*’

music, was not then regarded or cultivated. Harmony, and the art of composition in parts, it must be confessed, is one of the noblest of the modern inventions: That a fondness, however, for that only, to almost the total neglect or exclusion of air and melody in music, should have universally prevailed
at

'*arms!*' and '*Britons, strike home!*' is one of many which might be mentioned. He was the first who introduced the trumpet as an accompaniment to his songs. I have been told by a person, who was well acquainted with Handel, that, on hearing one of Purcell's songs, accompanied by Grano on the trumpet, that great master was so fond of it, that, in his opera of *Rinaldo*, the first which he composed in England, he made the song '*Hor la tromba*' for Grano, one of the finest trumpet songs that ever was composed, or perhaps ever will be composed, as that noble, martial instrument is now neglected and laid aside, as too manly for the soft manners of the age! Indeed, the whole opera of *Rinaldo* is excellent, notwithstanding the ridicule of the Spectator, which, by the bye, does not affect the music.—To conclude: If we are to look for a good national taste in music, at any time, in England, I imagine it must be in the compositions of Purcell, and his contemporaries Lock, Wise, Blow, &c. To speak of the merit of the present theatrical music in England, would be rash: I shall, therefore, here conclude this digression, which, in an essay on so desultory a subject as music, will, I hope, be excused.

at this time in Italy, is a remarkable fact*. We shall further illustrate this from another historical fact in the annals of music.

The *Opera*, that noble and elegant species of the musical drama, now so much improved and established in most of the theatres in Europe, and which chiefly consists in *airs* for a *single voice*, with instrumental accompaniments, was not known in Palestrina's or the Prince of Venosa's time. It was first introduced in the beginning of the seventeenth century. The dramatic poem of *Euridice*, made by *Ottavio Rinuccini*, a Florentine poet, was set to music by *Jacopo Peri*, who, on that occasion, invented the *recitativo*, or musical discourse. The opera of *Euridice* was first represented on the theatre at Florence in the year 1600, on occasion of the marriage of Mary of Medicis with King Henry IV. of France. What appears most remarkable, so much was harmonic composition universally

* It is curious to observe, that the state of music in England, at the same period, appears to have been precisely similar to that in Italy, that is, purely-harmonic, as may be seen from the compositions of Marbeck, Tallis, Birde, &c.; and, after them, of Henry Lawes, Lanere, and Campion, down to the Restoration.

fully established, that, in the above opera, there is not one air or song for a single voice. The whole opera consists of *duetti, terzetti, cori, and recitativo*. —To return to my subject:

In the above state of music in Italy, we may suppose the Scottish melodies of King James I. had found their way into that country. Is it, then, to be wondered at, that such a genius as the Prince of Venosa should be struck with the genuine simplicity of strains which spoke directly to the heart, and that he should imitate and adopt such new and affecting melodies, which he found wanting in the music of his own country? The sweet, natural, and plaintive strains of the old song *Waly waly up the bank—Will ye go to the ewe-bughts, Marion—Be constant ay*—and many other of our old songs about that age, must touch the heart of every genius, of whatever country, and might enrich the compositions of the greatest foreign master.

Purpureus late qui splendeat unus et alter
Adfuitur pannus.

HOR.

I hope we shall no longer hear the absurd tale, that the Scottish music was either invented or improved

who, at that time, were thought to excel all other nations in church music.

King James is said to have been a fine performer on the lute and harp, with which he accompanied his own songs *. Playing on these instruments must, by the Prince's example, have become fashionable; and, of course, a more regular and refined modulation in the Scottish songs must have been introduced. The simple scale of the pipe, by the introduction of the stringed instruments, became, in consequence, much enlarged, not only by a greater extent of notes, but by the division of them into semitones.

The

in ea peritissimos alebat. Insuper quæ vocant organa qualia nunc sunt, antea enim veteribus et nescio an fatis, ad sacram harmoniam, accommodis cantibus utebantur, tum primum per eum in Scotiam sunt adducta. Tantum vero quidam nostrates ea in re brevi proficere, ut Anglos (quos aiunt reliquis nationibus hac in arte anteferri) haudquaquam deinceps inferiores haberentur. *Boeth. Hist. lib. 17.*—A noble and irrefragable testimony, this, of the establishment and excellency of church music in England and Scotland, in the time of King *Henry VI.* and *James I.*; that is, a century before *Palestrina*.

* In sono vocis, et in tactu Citharæ (natura) dulciter et dilectabiliter illum prædotavit. *Fordun, vol. 2. c. 28.*

The great aera of poetry, as of music, in Scotland, I imagine to have been from the beginning of the reign of King James I. down to the end of King James V's. * The old cathedrals and abbeys, those venerable monuments of Gothic grandeur, with the choristers belonging to them, according to the splendour of their ritual church service, were so many schools or seminaries for the cultivation of music. It must be owned, however, that, altho' the science of harmonic music was cultivated by the church composers, yet as the merit of the church music; at that time, consisted in its harmony only, the fine flights and pathetic expression of our songs could borrow nothing from thence.

This was likewise the aera of chivalry: The feudal system was then in its full vigour.

The Scottish nobility, possessed of great estates, hereditary jurisdictions, and a numerous vassalage, maintained, in their remote castles, a state and splendour

* Within this aera flourished *Gavin Douglas*, Bishop of Dunkeld, whose excellent translation of Virgil's *Aeneis* may compare with Chaucer, the first poet of that age; *Bellenden*, arch-dean of Murray; *Dunbar*, *Henryson*, *Scott*, *Montgomery*, *Str D. Lindsay*, and many others, whose fine poems have been preserved in Banatyne's excellent collection, of which several have been published by Allan Ramsay, in his *Evergreen*.

dour little inferior to the court of their kings. Upon solemn occasions, *tilts* and *tournaments* were proclaimed, and *festivals* held with all the Gothic grandeur and magnificence of *chivalry*, which drew numbers of knights and dames to these solemnities.—Thus the poetic, the sublime *Warton!*

 Illumining the vaulted roof,
 A thousand torches flam'd aloof,
 From massy cups, with golden gleam,
 Sparkled the red Metheglin's stream :
 To grace the gorgeous festival,
 Along the lofty windowed hall,
 The storied tapestry was hung,
 With *minstrelsy* the rafters rung ;
 Of *harps*, that, with reflected light,
 From the proud gallery glittered bright.
 To crown the banquet's solemn close,
 Themes of *British* glory rose ;
 And, to the strings of various chime,
 Attemper'd the *heroic* rime.

ODE on the Grave of King Arthur.

James IV. and V. were both of them magnificent Princes : They kept splendid courts, and were great promoters of those heroic entertainments*.

In

* Pitfcottie's History of James IV. Leslie, &c.

We have two fine pictures of these Princes by two very eminent masters, which I cannot resist the pleasure of exhibiting in this place.

The

In the family of every chief, or head of a clan, the *Bard* was a very considerable person: His office, upon solemn feasts, was to sing or rehearse the splendid actions of the heroes, ancestors of the family, which he accompanied with the harp. At this time, too, there were *itinerant* or *strolling minstrels*, performers on the harp, who went about the country, from house to house, upon solemn occasions, reciting *heroic ballads*, and other popular epifodes.

These *wandering harpers* are mentioned thus by Major: ‘ *In Cithara, Hibernenses aut flvestres*
‘ *Scoti,*

The learned *Erasmus* thus describes King James IV. ‘ *Erat ea corporis specie, ut vel procul Regem posses agnoscere, ingenii vis mira, incredibilis omnium rerum cognitio.*’

The French poet *Ronsard*, who came to Scotland with the Princess Magdalene, wife to James V. and was an officer in the King’s household, gives the following beautiful description of that Prince:

*Ce Roy d’Ecosse etoit en la fleur de ses ans,
Ces cheveux non tondu comme fin or linsans.
Gordonez et creopez, flotans dessus sa face;
Et, par son col de lait, lui donoit de bon grace.
Son Port etoit Royal, son regard vigoureux,
De vertus, et de bonneur et de guerre amoureux.
La douceur, et la force, illustroient son visage,
Si que VENUS et MARS en avoient fait partage.*

‘ *Scoti, qui in illa arte praeicipui sunt.*’—To these
 sylvan minstrels, I imagine we are indebted for
 many fine old songs, which are more varied in
 their melody, and more regular in their composi-
 tion, as they approach nearer to modern times,
 though still retaining ‘ their wood-notes wild. *’

To

* To frame an idea of the heaven-born genius of the an-
 cient minstrel or wandering harper, in a rude age, see Dr
 Beattie’s fine poem, the *Minstrel*, Part I.

—Song was his favourite, and first pursuit,
 The wild harp rang to his adventurous hand,
 And languish’d to his breath the plaintive flute;
 His infant muse, though artless, was not mute.—

Meanwhile, whate’er of *beautiful*, or *new*,
Sublime, or *dreadful*, in earth, sea, or sky,
 By chance or search, was offered to his view,
 He scanned with curious and romantic eye,
 Whate’er of lore tradition could supply,
 From Gothic tale, or song, or fable old,
 Rous’d him, still keen to listen, and to pry;
 At last, though long by penury controll’d,
 And solitude, his soul her graces ’gan unfold.

Minstrel, Part I.

The last of these strolling harpers [was *Rory* or *Roderick*
Dall, who, about fifty years ago, was well known and much
 caressed by the Highland gentry, whose houses he frequent-
 ed. His chief residence was about Blair in *Athole* and
Dunkeld.

To the wandering harpers we are certainly indebted for that species of music, which is now scarcely known; I mean *the Port*. Almost every great family had a *Port* that went by the name of the family. Of the few that are still preserved are, *Port Lennox*, *Port Gordon*, *Port Seton*, and *Port Athole*, which are all of them excellent in their kind. The *Port* is not of the martial strain of the *march*, as some have conjectured; those above named being all in the plaintive strain, and modulated for the harp.

The *Pibrach*, the march or battle-tune of the *Highland Clans*, with the different strains introduced of the *coronich*, &c. is fitted for the *bagpipe* only: Its measure, in the *pas grave* of the *Highland piper*, equipped with his flag and military ensigns, when marching up to battle, is stately and animating, rising often to a degree of fury.

To class the old Scottish songs, according to the several aeras in which we may suppose them to have been made, is an attempt which can arise to conjecture only, except as to such of them as carry more certain marks, to be afterwards taken notice of.

Of

Dunkeld. He was esteemed a good composer, and a fine performer on the harp, to which he sung in a pathetic manner. Many of his songs are preserved in that country.

Of our most ancient melodies, I have, in the beginning of this essay, given a few, such as *Gil Morrice*, &c. with what I imagine to be the signatures of their antiquity. To what aera these can be referred, I do not pretend to say: My conjecture, however, is, that, from their artless simplicity, they belong to an age prior to James I. The investigation of other pieces of our oldest music, by the same standard, may be an agreeable amusement to the curious.

From the genius of King James, his profound skill in the principles of music, and great performance on the harp, we may esteem him the inventor and reformer of the Scottish vocal music. Of his age (some of them very probably of his composition) may be reckoned the following simple, plaintive, and antient melodies: *Jocky and Sandie*—*Waly, waly up the bank*—*Ay waking Oh!*—*Be constant ay*—*Will ye go to the ewe-bughts, Marion*.

From these, by an insensible gradation, we are led to what I conjecture may be called the *second epoch* of our songs, that is, from the beginning of the reign of *King James IV. James V.* and to the end of that of *Queen Mary*, within which period may be reckoned the following songs, the old tragic ballads

lads *Bush ye, bush ye, my bonny bride, and Hero and Leander—Willie's rair and Willie's fair—Cromlet's Lilt—The Flowers of the Forest—Gilderoy—Balow my boy—The Gaberlunye Man—The bonnie Earle of Murray—Leeder Haughs in Tarow—Absence will never alter me—Tak' your auld cloak about ye*—and the old melody lately revived, called *Queen Mary's Lamentation*, which, I am well assured, belongs to, and bears the signatures of that age. In the preceding airs, besides a more varied melody, there is likewise an artful degree of modulation, observable in several of them, in the introduction of the seventh of the key, as in *Waly Waly—The Flowers of the Forest—Queen Mary's Lament—The bonny Earle of Murray*. This strain is peculiarly characteristic of the ancient Scottish songs, and has a fine pathetic effect, which must give pleasure to the most refined ear. As, in the foregoing observation, it is remarked by Taffoni, on the new-invented music of King James I. that it ‘*was plaintive and melancholly, and different from all other music*’*, it may, with probability, be conjectured, from James's skill and masterly performance on the stringed instruments, that this peculiar strain, of the seventh of the key, may have been

F f

first

* Il trouva da se stesso, un nuova musica, lamentevole e mesta, diferente da tutte l'altra.

first invented and introduced into our old music by that Prince.

In the third aera, which comprehends the space of time from Queen Mary to the Restoration, may be classed the following songs, *Through the lang muir I followed my Willie—Pinky Hauze—Etrick Banks—I'll never leave thee—The Broom of Cowdenknows—Down the burn Davie—Auld Rob Morris—Where Helen lies—Fie on the wars—Thro' the wood, laddie—Fie let us a' to the wedding—Muirland Willie.*

From these we are led to the last aera, that is, from the *Restoration, to the Union.* Within this period, from their more regular measure and more modern air, we may almost, with certainty, pronounce the following fine songs to have been made, *An' thou wert mine ain thing—O dear minnie, what sal I do—The bush aboon Traquair—The last time I came o'er the moor—Mary Scot, the flower of Yarrow—The bonny boatman—Sae merry as we ha' been—My dearie an' thou die—She rose and let me in—My apron, dearie—Love is the cause of my mourning—Allan water—There's my thumb I'll ne'er beguile thee—The Highland laddie—Bonny Jean of Aberdeen—The lass of Patie's mill—The yellow-hair'd laddie—John Hay's bonny lassie—Tweeda-jide—Lochaber.*

We

We are not, however, to imagine, that, from this last period, the genius of Scottish music had taken flight: That is not the case. Indeed, the number of Scottish songs has of late not much increased; it, nevertheless, is true, that, since that last period, several fine songs have been made, which will stand the test of time. Amongst these are, *The birks of Invermay*—*The banks of Forth*—*Roslin Castle*—*The braes of Ballendine*. The two last were composed by Oswald, whose genius in composition, joined to his taste in the performance of the Scottish music, was natural and pathetic.

In thus classing the songs, as above, it is obvious, that no fixed or certain rules can be prescribed. Some of these old songs, it is true, ascertain of themselves the precise æra to which they belong; such as, *The flowers of the Forest*, composed on the fatal battle of *Flowden*, where the gallant *James IV.* and the flower of the Scottish nobility and gentry fell;—*The Souters of Selkirk*, composed * on the same occasion;—*Gilderoy*, made on the

* This ballad is founded on the following incident:—Previous to the battle of *Flowden*, the town-clerk of *Selkirk* conducted a band of eighty *souters*, or shoemakers, of that town, who joined the royal army; and the town-clerk, in
reward

the death of a famous outlaw hanged by James V.; —*Queen Mary's Lament*; —*The bonny Erle of Murray*, slain by Huntlie in 1592. In general, however, in making those arrangements, besides the characters which I have mentioned, as I know of no other distinguishing marks for a fixed standard, the only rule I could follow was to select a few of the most undoubted ancient melodies, such as may be supposed to be the production of the simplest instrument, of the most limited scale, as the shepherd's reed; and thence to trace them gradually downward, to more varied, artful, and regular modulations, the compositions of more polished manners and times, and suitable to instruments of a more extended scale.

If, in following this plan, I have been successful, it will afford entertainment to a musical genius, to trace the simple strains of our rude ancestors
through

reward of his loyalty, was created a Knight-banneret by that Prince. They fought gallantly, and were most of them cut off. A few who escaped, found on their return, in the forest of Lady-wood edge, the wife of one of their brethren lying dead, and her child sucking her breast. Thence the town of Selkirk obtained, for their arms, a woman sitting upon a sarcophagus, holding a child in her arms; in the background a wood; and on the sarcophagus the arms of Scotland.

through different ages, from King James I. who truly may be stiled the Father of the Scottish songs, so distinguished from the music of every other country, progressively downwards, to modern times. This, to a musical genius, may afford the same amusement it has given to me, in considering the melodies thus selected and arranged, trying them by the signatures above pointed out, and adding others to the above number.

A second point I also had in view: It was, from the number of our Scottish songs, to select a few of those which I imagine to be the finest, and most distinguished, for originality of air, agreeable modulation, and expression of the subject for which they have been composed. Upon a review of these airs, thus far I may venture to say, that, for genuine flight of fancy, pleasing variety, and originality, they will stand the test of comparison with the music of any country, and afford entertainment to the most refined taste.

I have hinted that our Scottish songs owe nothing to the *church-music* of the cathedrals and abbeys before the Reformation; for, although music made a considerable part of the ritual church-service, yet, from some of their books, which have
 escaped

escaped the rage of the Reformers, we find their music to have consisted entirely of harmonic compositions, of four, five, often of six, seven, and eight parts, all in strict counterpoint. Such were perfectly suitable to the solemnity of religious worship; and, when performed by a full choir of voices, accompanied by the organ, must undoubtedly have had a solemn and awful effect upon a mind disposed to devotion. Church-music has nothing to do with the passions. The style of such composition is to calm the mind, and inspire devotion, suitable to the majesty of that *Being* to whom it is addressed. Nothing, however, can be more opposite than such harmonic compositions to the genius of love-songs, which consist in the simple melody of one single part.

It is a common tradition, that, in ridicule of the cathedral-service, several of their hymns were, by the wits among the Reformed, burlesqued, and sung as profane ballads. Of this there is some remaining evidence. The well-known tunes of *John come kiss me now—Kind Robin lo'es me—and John Anderson my jo*—are said to be of that number.

At the establishment of the Reformation, one of the first pious works of the Reformed clergy was,

to translate, into Scottish metre, the Psalms of David, and to introduce them into the kirks, to be sung to the old church-tunes. John Knox's book of psalms, called *The Common Tunes*, is still extant, and sung in the churches, and consists of four parts; a treble, tenor, counter-alt, and bass. The harmony of these tunes is learned and full, and proves them to be the work of very able masters in the counterpoint.

In order, however, to enlarge the psalmody, the clergy soon after were at pains to translate, into Scottish metre, several parts of scripture, and some old Latin hymns, and other pieces. At the same time, as they had no objections to the old music, they made an effort to reclaim some of those tunes from the profane ballads into which they had been burlesqued, and sung by the vulgar.

A collection of these pieces was printed at Edinburgh about the 1590, by Andro Hart, in old Saxon, or black letter, under the title of, *A compendious book of godly and spirituall songs, collectit out of sundry parts of the scripture, with sundrie of other ballats, changed out of prophaine sanges, for avoiding of sinne and harlotrie, &c.*

Amongst

Amongst these ballads, *John come kifs me now* makes his appearance; stripped indeed of his *prophane drefs*, which had promoted *finne and barlot-rie*; but, in exchange, so strangely equipped in his *penitential habit*, as to make a more ridiculous figure than his brother Jack, in the *Tale of a Tub*. As a curiosity, I shall give two or three of the stanzas of this new-converted godly ballad.

John come kifs me now,
 John come kifs me now,
 John come kifs me by and by,
 And mak na mair adow.

The Lord thy God I am,
 That (John) does thee call
 John, represents man,
 By grace celestial.

My prophets call, my preachers cry,
 John come kifs me now,
 John come kifs me by and by,
 And mak na mair adow.

' To laugh were want of godliness and grace,
 ' And to be grave exceeds all power of face.'

ROSE.

What a strange medley of canting absurdity and nonsense! Such shocking indecent familiarity, under the name of Devotion! This was the leaven, which,

which, fermenting into that wild spirit of fanaticism in the following age, involved the nation in blood, and overturned the state of the three kingdoms. Of this leven, from some late appearances, there is reason to apprehend that too much still remains amongst us. To proceed :

If the other tunes, preserved of the old church-music, were in the same stile of *John come kiss me now*, our fine old melodies, I think, could borrow nothing from them.

I shall conclude this essay with a few observations on the Scottish songs.

The Scottish melodies contain strong expression of the passions, particularly of the melancholy kind ; in which the air often finely corresponds to the subject of the song. In this, I conjecture, the excellency of the ancient Greek music consisted, of which we are told such wonderful effects. The Greek musicians were also poets, who accompanied their own verses on the harp. Such, likewise, was the Saxon Alfred ; and in the same light we may see our James I. who both of them accompanied their own poems on the lute or harp. Terpander is said to have composed music for the Iliad of Ho-

mer; Timotheus played and sung his own lyrical poems; and the poet Simonides his own elegies:

‘ Quid moestius lacrymis Simonidis !’

exclaims Catullus; and, inspired with the genius of music, in this fine apostrophe, cries out our great poet!

And, O sad Virgin, could thy power,
But raise Musæus from his bower !
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing,
Such notes as warbled on the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto’s cheek,
And made *hell* grant what *love* did seek.

Let us acknowledge the excellency of the Greek music; yet as the principles of harmony, or composition in parts, seem not to have been known to them, at least as far as has yet been discovered, this excellency of their music must have resulted from the natural melody of their airs, expressive of the words to which they were adapted. In this light, therefore, we may run a parallel between the ancient Greek music and our Scottish melodies; and, in spite of the prejudiced fondness which we are apt to conceive in favour of the ancients,

it

it is probable that we do the best of their music no hurt in classing it with our own.

What person of taste can be insensible to the fine airs of, *I'll never leave thee—Allan Water—An' thou wer't mine ain thing—The braes of Ballendine,* &c. when sung with taste and feeling!

Love, in its various situations of *hope, success, disappointment,* and *despair,* are finely expressed in the natural melody of the old Scottish songs. How naturally does the air correspond with the following description of the restless languor of a maid in love!

Ay wa'king oh!
 Wa'king ay and wearie;
 Sleep I canna get,
 For thinking o' my dearie.

When I sleep, I dream;
 When I wake, I'm irie*;
 Rest I canna get,
 For thinking o' my dearie.

The simple melody of the old song *Waly! Waly!* is the pathetic complaint of a forsaken maid, be-
 moaning

* *Irie* is a Scottish word that has no correspondent term in English. It implies that sort of fear which is conceived by a person apprehensive of apparitions.

moaning herself along the late-frequented haunts of her and her lover. The old Scottish word *waly* signifies *wail*, or heavy sorrow, and lamentation,

Waly ! waly ! up the bank,
And waly ! waly ! down the brae ;
And waly ! waly ! on yon burn side,
Where I and my true love did gae.

Thus *Petrarch*, in one of his beautiful sonnets :

Valle, che de lamenti miei se' piena,
Fiume, che spesso del mio pianger cresce,—
Colle che mi piacesti, hor mi rincresci,
Ov' ancor per usanza amor mi mena—
Quinci vedea' l mio bene !—&c.

How soothing and plaintive is the lullaby of a forsaken mistress over her child, expressed in *Lady Anne Bothwell's lament* ! How romantic the melody of the old love-ballad of *Hero and Leander* ! What a melancholy love-story is told in the old song of *Jocky and Sandy* ! and what frantic grief expressed in *I wish I were where Helen lies* !

It were endless to run through the many fine airs expressive of sentiment, and passion, in the number of our Scottish songs, which, when sung in the genuine natural manner, must affect the heart of every

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very person of feeling, whose taste is not vitiated and seduced by *fashion* and *novelty*.

As the Scottish songs are the *flights of genius*, devoid of art, they bid defiance to artificial graces and affected cadences. A Scots song can only be sung in taste by a Scottish voice. To a sweet, liquid, flowing voice, capable of swelling a note from the softest to the fullest tone, and what the Italians call a *voce di petto*, must be joined *sensibility* and *feeling*, and a perfect understanding of the subject, and *words* of the song, so as to know the *significant word* on which to *swell* or *soften* the tone, and lay the force of the note. From a want of knowledge of the language, it generally happens, that, to most of the foreign masters, our melodies, at first, must seem wild and uncouth; for which reason, in their performance, they generally fall short of our expectation. We sometimes, however, find a foreign master, who, with a genius for the pathetic, and a knowledge of the subject and words, has afforded very high pleasure in a Scottish song. Who could hear with insensibility, or without being moved in the greatest degree, *Tenducci* sing *I'll never leave thee*, or *The braes of Ballendine!*—or *Will ye go to the ewe-bugshts, Marion*, sung by Signora Corri?

It

It is a common defect in some who pretend to sing, to affect to smother the words, by not articulating them, so as we scarce can find out either the subject or language of their song. This is always a sign of want of feeling, and the mark of a bad singer; particularly of Scottish songs, where there is generally so intimate a correspondence between the air and subject. Indeed, there can be no good vocal music without it.

The proper accompaniment of a Scottish song, is a plain, thin, dropping bass, on the harpsichord or guitar. The fine breathings, those *heart-felt touches*, which *genius* alone can express, in our songs, are lost in a noisy accompaniment of instruments. The full chords of a thorough-bass should be used sparingly, and with judgment, not to overpower, but to support and raise the voice at proper pauses.

Where, with a fine voice, is joined some skill and execution on either of those instruments, the air, by way of symphony; or introduction to the song, should always be first played over; and, at the close of every stanza, the last part of the air should be repeated, as a relief for the voice, which it gracefully sets off. In this *symphonic part*, the performer

performer may shew his taste and fancy on the instrument, by varying it *ad libitum*.

A Scottish song admits of no cadence; I mean, by this, no fanciful or capricious descant upon the close of the tune. There is one embellishment, however, which a fine finger may easily acquire, that is, an easy *shake*. This, while the organs are flexible in a young voice, may, with practice, be easily attained.

A Scottish song, thus performed, is among the highest of entertainments to a *musical genius*. But is this genius to be acquired either in the performer or hearer? It cannot. *Genius in music, as in poetry, is the gift of Heaven*. It is born with us; it is not to be learned.

An artist on the violin may display the magic of his fingers, in running from the top to the bottom of the finger-board, in various intricate *capricios*, which, at most, will only excite surprise; while a very middling performer, of taste and feeling, in a subject that admits of the *pathos*, will touch the heart in its finest sensations. The finest of the Italian composers, and many of their fingers, possess this to an amazing degree. The opera-airs of
these

these great masters, *Pergolese*, *Jomelli*, *Galuppi*, *Perez*, and many others of the present age, are astonishingly pathetic and moving. Genius, however, and feeling, are not confined to country or climate. *A maid, at her spinning-wheel*, who knew not a note in music, with a sweet voice, and the force of a native genius, has oft drawn tears from my eyes. That gift of Heaven, in short, is not to be defined: It can only be felt.

I cannot better conclude this essay, than in the words of one who possessed it in the most exalted degree. Addressing himself to a young composer, he speaks thus: ‘ Seek not to know what is *genius*. If thou hast it, thy feelings will tell thee what it is. If thou hast it not, thou never wilt know it. The genius of the musician subjects the universe to its power. It draws its pictures by sounds. It expresses ideas by feelings, and feelings by accents. We feel in our hearts the force of the passions which it excites. Through the medium of genius, *pleasure* assumes additional charms, and the *grief* which it excites breaks forth into cries. But, alas! to those who feel not in themselves the spring of genius, its expressions convey no idea. Its prodigies are unknown to those who cannot imitate them. Wouldst
 ‘ thou

' thou know if thou art animated with one spark
 ' of that bright fire? Run, fly to *Naples*, and there
 ' listen to the master-pieces of *Leo*, *Durante*, *Jo-*
 ' *melli*, *Pergolese*. If thine eyes are filled with
 ' tears, thy heart palpitates, thy whole frame is
 ' agitated, and the oppression of transport arises al-
 ' most to suffocation; take up *Metastasio*, his ge-
 ' nius will inflame thine own, and thou wilt com-
 ' pose after his example. These are the operations
 ' of genius, and the tears of others will recom-
 ' pense thee for those which thy masters have cau-
 ' sed thee to shed. But, if thou art calm and tran-
 ' quil amidst the transports of that great art; if
 ' thou feelest no delirium, no *ecstasy*; if thou art
 ' only moved with pleasure, at what should tran-
 ' sport thee with rapture, dost thou dare to ask
 ' what *genius* is? Profane not, vulgar man, that
 ' name sublime! What does it import thee to know
 ' what thou canst never feel? *

P. S. Since printing the foregoing sheets, I have
 seen a small volume, just now published at London,
 entitled, *Select Scottish Ballads, volume II.* in which
 the first piece is a comic poem, called *Peblis to the*
Play, beginning thus, ' *At Beltane,*' &c. From

H h

reading

* Rousseau, sous le mot *genie*,

reading this poem, which is said by the editor to be taken from a MS. of Dr Percy's, the learned and ingenious publisher of the *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, and discovered by him in an ancient MS. collection of old Scottish songs, preserved in the Pepysian Library. Although at present I will not take upon me to determine with precision, yet I incline to think that this may be the poem mentioned in the quotation from *Major*, p. 200. of this Dissertation, as a popular ballad composed by King James I. and, taking it as such, I think the Public is greatly indebted to Dr Percy for the discovery of one of the *desiderata* of the poetical works of that Prince; and likewise to the ingenious editor of the Scottish Ballads, for giving it to the Public. The editor has added a short note, as the remark of Dr Percy on this poem, which is as follows: 'This song, written by King James I. is a proof that *Christ's Kirk on the Green* was written by his descendant James V. being evidently a more modern composition.'

High as my opinion is of Dr Percy's judgment, I can by no means submit to his decision on this point. I have read both the poems in question with attention, the result of which, in my humble opinion, is, that they appear to be compositions of the same age. It must be confessed, that, in judging

ing of ancient writings, it is no easy matter, to fix, with precision, the true æra to which poems written even within a century of one another may belong. To give one example: No body will doubt that the poem called *The King's Quair* was written by King James I. As little doubt is there of the authenticity of the *Æneis of Virgil*, by Gavin Douglas; and, although there has elapsed near a century between the first and the last of these poems, to one who was to judge only, from the language, without knowing the precise age in which these poems were written, it would be difficult to ascertain which of them is most modern. To give another instance: Chaucer, at this day, appears to be as modern, and fully as intelligible in his language, as Gavin Douglas's *Æneis*, written above a hundred years after.

Language, like manners, varies in its progression. At different periods it is sometimes rapid, sometimes slow, and often stationary, according to the influence of contingent circumstances. Who would judge, from the language of *Boccaccio*, or *Petrarcha*, and that of *Metastasio*, that near four centuries had elapsed between them? The truth is, that, from Chaucer to near a century after, the English language appears to have advanced very little, that

is,

is, during the bloody wars between the houses of York and Lancaster; so that, of writings falling within that period, it is no easy matter to discern any discrepancy of language. But, to come to a closer examination, there appears in both poems a similarity of phrase and of words, of which several instances might be given, sufficient to show that they are coeval, and probably the works of the same hand. Indeed, to give judgment between them, or to say that the one is of an age older than the other, appears to me to be so nice, that, were I not convinced, from their internal marks, that they have been written in the same age, one might be induced to think, from sundry stanzas in the poem of *Peblis*, that it is much more modern than *Christ's Kirk*. The following stanzas, by changing only the orthography in a few of the final syllables, might pass for the language of the present century, so inconclusive are the arguments that may be used on this head.

See the 1st, 2d, and 4th stanzas.—The following 9th stanza, in the modern Scottish orthography, might pass as the production of the present day:

‘ Then they came to the town’s end,

‘ Withouten more delay,

‘ He

- ‘ He before, and she before,
- ‘ To see wha was maist gay :
- ‘ All that looked them upon
- ‘ Leuch fast at thair aray ;
- ‘ Some said that they were market folk,
- ‘ Some said the Queen of May
- ‘ Was come,
- ‘ Of Peblis to the play.’

In short, unless in some uncouth words only, which, in a ludicrous poem, describing the low manners of the times in the vulgar language, and which words occur occasionally and as frequently in the poem of *Christ's Kirk* as in that of *Peblis*, the one is as intelligible to every Scottish reader, who is acquainted with the vulgar language of his country, as the other.

After all, I imagine my complaisance to Dr Percy carries me rather too far, when I argue this point, upon his own principles, while there is the most positive evidence against the Doctor's conjecture ; evidence which must outweigh all conjecture. Mr George Banantyne, one of the canons of the cathedral of Murray, living in the age of *James V.* gives the strongest negative testimony, that that Prince was not the author of *Christ's Kirk of the Green*, by asserting positively that the poem was written by
King

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King James I. Let me ask the gentlemen on the other side of the question, Have they ever heard of any testimony, coeval with Banantyne, that contradicts him? No; it will not be alledged; nor is there is any such assertion for more than a hundred years after. Bishop Gibson is the first who, in *anno* 1691, says, in his edition of *Christ's Kirk*, that it is *supposed* to have been written by James V. and, upon his bare supposition, later writers have followed him. Thus far I think it necessary to add to what I have already said on this point, in answer to the opinion of Dr Percy, taking it, upon the credit of the editor of the Select Scottish Ballads, that the foregoing remark is his.



F I N I S.

